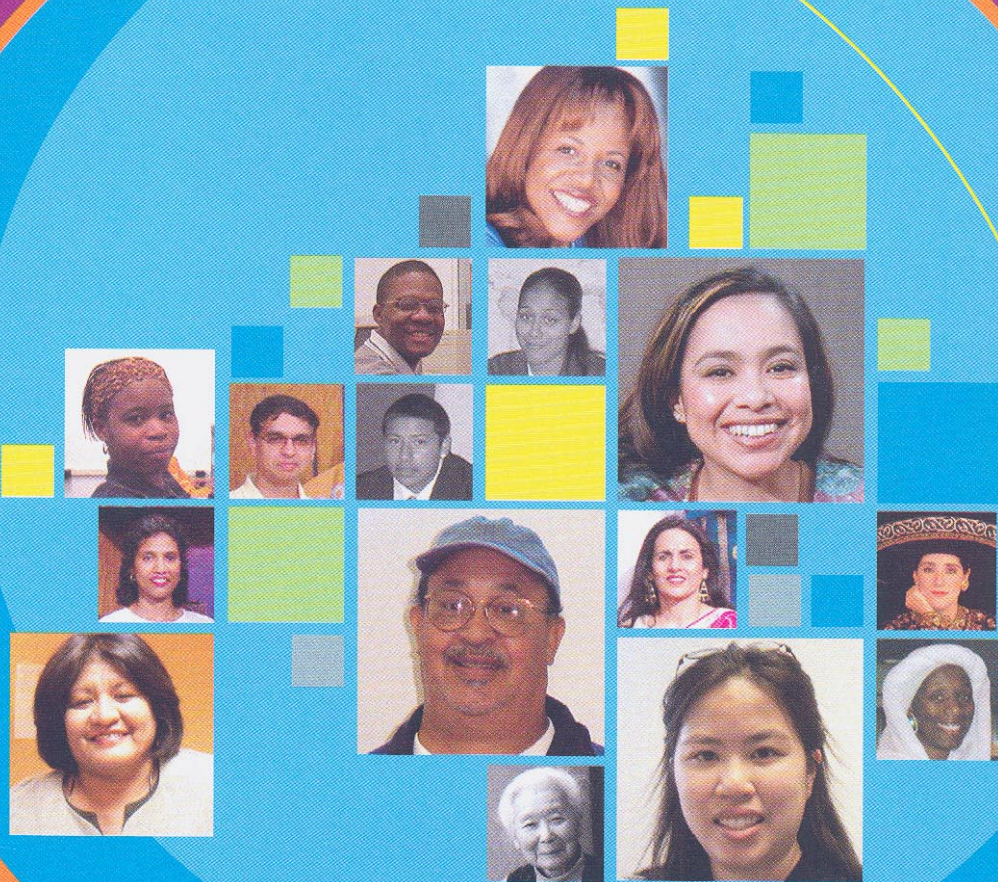


COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW



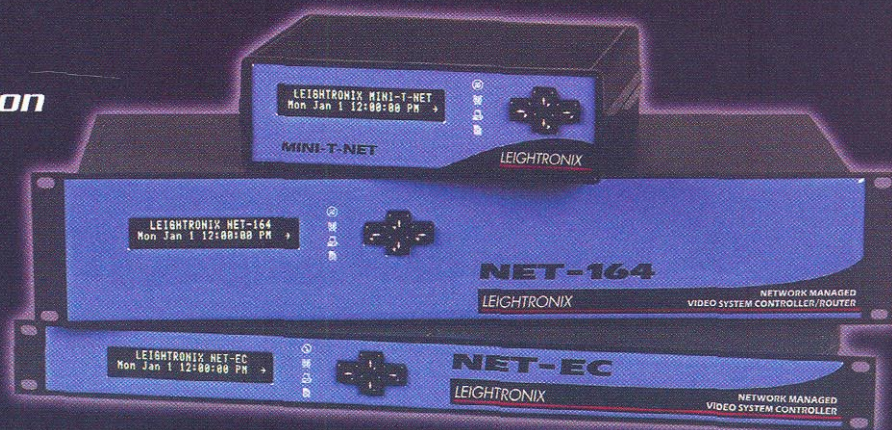
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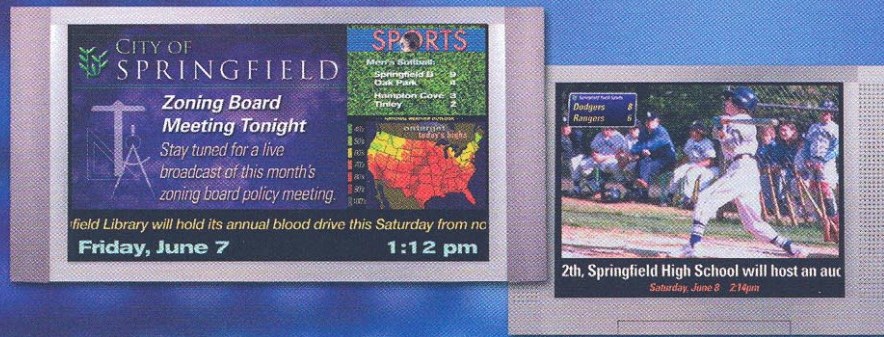
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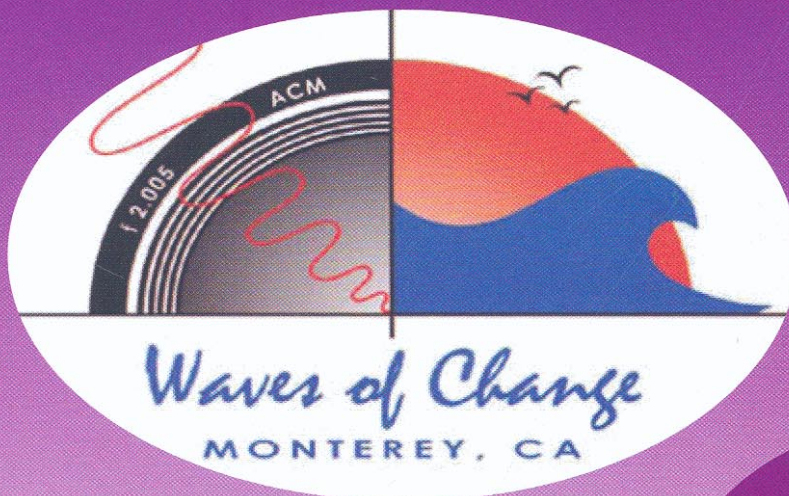
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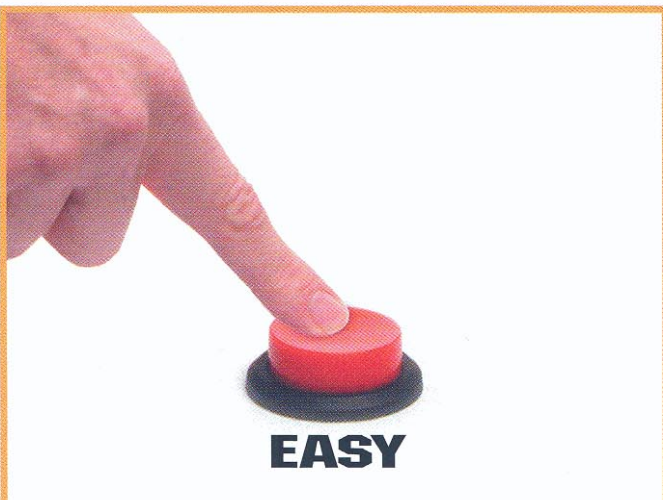
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As the journal of the Alliance for Community Media, COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW shall support the Alliance mission by providing: a comprehensive overview of past, present and future issues critical to the Alliance and its membership; vigorous and thoughtful debate on those issues; and a venue for members and like-minded groups to present issues critical to the Alliance.



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking Forward

BY ANTHONY RIDDLE

Even among old friends, the first words of a conversation can sometimes be the most difficult to choose. It is hard to know the direction the conversation will take before that reunion takes place.

But when the time comes, it is as though no time has passed at all, as though the sentence has but paused to allow the speaker to catch her breath—and then continued forward to complete the original thought.

As I join you now in this Alliance as executive director, I jump into the middle of a fast-paced conversation among people who know each other well. I have to say it is very exciting to see how far the work of the Alliance has come even as I note how much work we have yet to accomplish.

In looking forward, it is first necessary to recognize the past. I want to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the previous executive director, Bunnie Riedel. The Alliance can be a tempestuous and wild sea, one that is difficult to navigate given limited resources and unlimited idealism. Bunnie was committed to the Alliance. She fought the battles for us as she saw them, directed us along a course she hoped would strengthen our organization and our cause, and put in a great deal of time and personal energy to see us through. Bunnie Riedel served as executive director of the Alliance for Community Media for over six years, longer than any other executive director in our history. This represents something of a life commitment to us that should be commended.

Looking forward, we are confronted with a field in the throes of regulatory and technical change so rapid that is almost impossible to comprehend—almost impossible because we have all predicted it for years. Corporate media has consolidated to a critical and dangerous level. Content is jumping from cable to broadband to wireless. Systems are integrating with each other in ways which make them hard to name and harder to regulate for

the public good. This technical utopia we were so pleased to trumpet a decade ago threatens to become a corporate dystopia in which the commercial voice is free while the public discourse is silenced.

Looking forward, we stand before a public which now knows what PEG Access is. This is because of your grassroots work. You have taught a generation how to use the tools and why. When we look forward, we see a second generation of electronic media activists springing up all around. The independent media movements in the United States are an offspring to our movement. In the new generation social and political activists are technically adept and working at the cutting edge. Organizations of all stripes are recognizing that they cannot serve their constituents without supporting the existence of community media.

This movement of ours extends throughout the world and takes many forms. It is a movement that needs the leadership of the Alliance for Community Media. It is a movement in which we must support and learn from the successes of others.

Looking forward, we must open this organization up to representing the broader community media movement—beyond our unflagging support for PEG franchise requirements. We should offer our support to our natural allies even as we receive their support in the years to come.

We must be intense in our efforts to mobilize our communities. We must prepare again to show our strength when it comes time to rewrite the telecommunications acts. We did it in 1994 and 1996 and we had great success.

If we look forward and show we are willing to do the work, we will see that there is no limit to what we can accomplish together.

Anthony Riddle [raiseeveryvoice@yahoo.com] is the new executive director of the Alliance for Community Media.

This movement of ours extends throughout the world and takes many forms. It is a movement that needs the leadership of the Alliance for Community Media. It is a movement in which we must support and learn from the successes of others.

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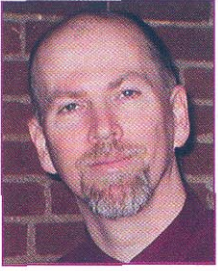
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FROM THE ALLIANCE CHAIR

Challenging Our Assumptions

BY TOM BISHOP

There is a gestalt when an idea crosses an artificial barrier created by differences in culture. New energy is added to already rich societies, reinvigorating and challenging our preconceptions of who we are and what we want to be.

I love experiences that challenge our assumptions. They give us a chance to shed personal limits and cross self-imposed boundaries, and usually, at least in my case, give us a chance to chuckle at our own preconceived notions.

I had just such an experience recently while in Washington, DC for the Alliance National Board meeting in December.

I had set out to get a quick lunch as I had some work to do over the break and needed something good to go. There was an Asian restaurant just down the street so I stopped in for chicken-fried rice.

There were two young women of Asian heritage standing at the kiosk where you placed your order for take-out. One was talking on the phone in what I now know to be Korean, and the other was standing somewhat absent-mindedly to one side.

I waited patiently for the first to finish, as the second didn't ask for my order. Before she took my order she turned to the second and said in heavily accented English to the second, "sorry about the phone. May I take your order?"

Assumption #1: I had assumed that the second young woman worked in the restaurant because of where she was standing. It turns out she, like I, was a customer.

The second young woman, in an accent that a college professor friend of mine would describe as "your Bronx is showing", surprised me by placing her lunch order in a strong New York borough dialect.

Assumption #2: Based on assumption #1, that young woman #2 worked in the restaurant, and since young woman #1, who worked at the restaurant spoke with a Korean accent, then young woman #2 must also speak with a Korean accent, or at the very least your standard mid-western one.

At this point I chuckled out loud at my own foolishness, which caused young woman #2 to look at me inquiringly. I told her, somewhat embarrassingly, of my silliness and she responded good-naturedly

with the time-tested reply, "well you know what they say about assuming. It makes an ass out of both u and me."

I replied, "nope. Just me!"

I asked both of them where they were from; Seoul, South Korea and the Bronx, NY, respectively, and what brought them to DC. The young woman from Seoul was a graduate student at Georgetown. The New Yorker a graduate student at American University.

They had something in common all right, but not what I had assumed. Assumptions are a dangerous thing in our diverse world.

It reminded me of *The Four Agreements*.

For those who don't know about *The Four Agreements*, it's a book by Miguel Ruiz based on Toltec teachings and wisdom with the basic concept that our perception of the world is based on agreements we make with ourselves. Change your agreements and you change your perception. The late Brian Wilson, then chair of the Alliance, presented this as one of the cornerstones in his life and it rubbed off on some of us.

Ruiz suggests four basic agreements that can help you change yourself and your outlook on life. Among them is "don't make assumptions." You should, "find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness and drama."

Think of the power and lesson in that. Just by asking instead of assuming what someone else, means, thinks, desires or believes, you will understand so much more about our diverse world. You will reduce the tension that can come from miscommunication based on assumptions and you will expand your own

knowledge of the world, learning more about others, where they are coming from, who they are and what they desire.

You might also glean a bit of knowledge that you can make use of in your own life. I'm a white-Appalachian guy from a small paper-mill town in Ohio. I'm pretty sure that Toltec wisdom is not the first thing that people think when they see me on the street. I wouldn't have thought the same thing of Brian, but by asking questions and through some great conversations I learned something that has helped me in my life.

This is one reason why the preservation of our diverse human culture is such an important aspect of what we do in community media. These aspects of history and society have an intrinsic value all their own, but more so, they have value for the lessons they teach us that can be shared across cultures.

There is a gestalt when an idea crosses an artificial barrier created by differences in culture. New energy is added to already rich societies, reinvigorating and challenging our preconceptions of who we are and what we want to be.

Challenging our assumptions.

And it's really so easy to do. Don't assume...ask. Ask the easy, inquisitive questions about someone's life and background to know more about where they are coming from. Also, ask the hard questions, when there are differences and tension, to make sure that you understand why, and if, you really differ.

You'll expand your knowledge and hopefully your understanding of our world.

Tom Bishop [tom@mediabridges.org] is executive director of Media Bridges in Cincinnati and chair of the National Board of the Alliance for Community Media.



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73	Sun 07/27/03 10:28:00	0:00:30	4815	Access Tucson Promos for Ma	35561
73	Sun 07/27/03 10:28:30	0:01:30	2007	Access Info Computer	9872
73	Sun 07/27/03 10:30:00	0:58:30	1188	Jenny Swagart Telecast	37266
73	Sun 07/27/03 11:28:30	0:01:30	2007	Access Info Computer	9872
73	Sun 07/27/03 11:30:00	0:30:00	3440	Tomorrow's World	0
73	Sun 07/27/03 12:00:00	1:00:00	4721	Christ Community Church	37350
73	Sun 07/27/03 13:00:00	0:57:12	4102	Bacon Memorial Evangelical Out	37271
73	Sun 07/27/03 13:57:12	0:10:00	4774	How to meet a Dog, Short Version	35541
73	Sun 07/27/03 13:59:12	0:00:49	2007	Access Info Computer	9872
73	Sun 07/27/03 14:00:00	1:00:00	0	Access Info Computer	0
73	Sun 07/27/03 15:00:00	0:50:00	151	AZ Examiner LIVE	1153
73	Sun 07/27/03 15:00:00	0:05:22	4868	Citizens for Sensible Transport	36345
73	Sun 07/27/03 15:09:22	0:00:38	2007	Access Info Computer	9872
73	Sun 07/27/03 15:00:00	0:50:00	2389	W.K.V.D. LIVE	23366
73	Sun 07/27/03 15:50:12	0:10:00	4785	What Will We Tell the Children?	35212
73	Sun 07/27/03 17:00:00	0:50:00	3974	Abolition O'Abolition LIVE	26488
73	Sun 07/27/03 17:50:00	0:09:05	3900	Diaries in 2000: We're not There	26152
73	Sun 07/27/03 17:59:05	0:00:55	2007	Access Info Computer	9872
73	Sun 07/27/03 18:00:00	0:50:00	2711	Access News LIVE	25434
73	Sun 07/27/03 18:50:00	0:10:00	2242	Shane Eden Promos	37341
73	Sun 07/27/03 19:00:00	0:50:00	2347	Black Man Know Thyself	13884
73	Sun 07/27/03 19:50:00	0:00:30	2955	Universal Methods of Parenting, 11	13211
73	Sun 07/27/03 19:50:30	0:05:21	4957	Gudley Middle School Safety C	38516
73	Sun 07/27/03 19:55:51	0:00:30	4815	Access Tucson Promos for Ma	35548
73	Sun 07/27/03			Cutting Edge	0

Appointment Book: Open 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM

Start Date/Time 6/6/2001 8:00 AM (Wednesday) Select Appointment Book Page Edit Schedules Interval 10 15 30 60 New Reservation

Updated: 7/8/2001 3:36 pm Legend: None Reserved Some Reserved All Reserved Doublebooked

	Edt 1 VHS	Edt 2 VHS	Edt 3 H8	Edt 4 H8	Screening Room	Training Room
6/6 8:00 a	1	1	1	1	1	1
6/6 8:30 a	1	1	1	1	1	1
6/6 9:00 a	1	1	1	1	Fishman, Lawrence R	1
6/6 9:30 a	1	1	1	1	Fishman, Lawrence R	Brewster, Doug
6/6 10:00 a	1	1	Whitmore, James, Jr	1	Fishman, Lawrence R	Brewster, Doug
6/6 10:30 a	1	1	Whitmore, James, Jr	1	Fishman, Lawrence R	Brewster, Doug
6/6 11:00 a	1	1	Whitmore, James, Jr	1	Fishman, Lawrence R	Brewster, Doug
6/6 11:30 a	1	1	Whitmore, James, Jr	McCray, Walker	Fishman, Lawrence R	Brewster, Doug
6/6 12:00 p	1	1	Public John Q	McCray, Walker	Fishman, Lawrence R	Brewster, Doug
6/6 12:30 p	1	1	Public John Q	Whitmore, James, Jr	McCray, Walker	Fishman, Lawrence R
6/6 1:00 p	1	1	Public John Q	McCray, Walker	Fishman, Lawrence R	Brewster, Doug
6/6 1:30 p	1	1	Public John Q	1	McCray, Walker	Fishman, Lawrence R
6/6 2:00 p	1	1	Public John Q	1	McCray, Walker	Fishman, Lawrence R
6/6 2:30 p	1	1	Public John Q	Turner, Tom, Jr	McCray, Walker	Fishman, Lawrence R
6/6 3:00 p	1	1	1	Turner, Tom, Jr	McCray, Walker	Fishman, Lawrence R
6/6 3:30 p	1	1	1	Turner, Tom, Jr	McCray, Walker	Fishman, Lawrence R
6/6 4:00 p	1	1	1	Turner, Tom, Jr	McCray, Walker	1
6/6 4:30 p	1	1	1	Turner, Tom, Jr	1	1
6/6 5:00 p	1	1	1	Turner, Tom, Jr	1	1
6/6 5:30 p	1	1	1	1	1	1
6/6 6:00 p	1	1	1	1	1	1
6/6 6:30 p	1	1	1	1	1	1
6/6 7:00 p	1	1	1	1	1	1
6/6 7:30 p	1	1	1	1	1	1

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Programming Analysis Report Options

Set Date Range for Report: Start Date 2/1/2001 End Date 12/31/2001 Include Filter Programs? ☐

Select "Breakdown" Subreports: All None Origin Subject Organization Type Organization Owner Project Funding Production Type Signal Source Project Program Producer Adult Content Filter

Program Origins to include: Mark All Mark None

Program Subjects to include: Mark All Mark None

Program Owners to include: Mark All Mark None

Channels to include: Mark All Mark None

1/2/2003 3:43 PM, Page 1

Your Hometown Access Center

Programming Analysis
For Schedule Dates: 7/1/2001 to 7/31/2001

	Hours Played	Number of Plays	Number of Different Programs Played
All Programming			
First Run	182.40	226	226
Repeat	1708.77	2225	350
Total First Run and Repeat	1891.17	2451	438
By Origin			
Access	178.13		



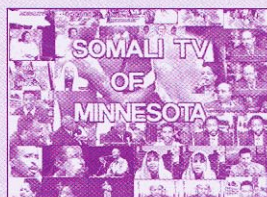
Facil is the result of a 15 year partnership between Becker Software and Access Tucson, Tucson Arizona's community media center.



AccessTucson

This issue of COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW, with its theme of *Cultural Preservation and Diversity*, features stories about media centers that are serving diverse communities with outreach, technology, training, funding, and programming, and profiles of community producers who are creating media from a wide range of cultural, racial, ethnic, and other viewpoints. We live in a diverse society. Here in the United States it's estimated that people of color made up 28 percent of the nation's population in 2000 and will total 38 percent in 2025 and 47 percent in 2050. Yet that diversity is not reflected in the mass media, where people of color and people of other cultures are underrepresented, stereotyped, and rarely allowed to speak for themselves. Reading this issue reaffirms my belief in the importance of community media. As the concentration of ownership in the mass media continues, community media's mission of providing open channels and encouraging diverse voices and viewpoints becomes even more critical. Through community media, people have the opportunity to preserve and celebrate their cultures, and to see and hear programming that may open their minds and hearts to a new appreciation of each other and our diverse society.

— Margie Nicholson, Guest Editor-in-Chief



Cultural Preservation & Diversity



Margie Nicholson [mnicholson@colum.edu] is a faculty member in the Senior Seminar Program at Columbia College Chicago. She is a former board member and chair of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (now the Alliance for Community Media) and former vice president/chief operating officer of Chicago Access Corporation. She currently serves on the board of the International Leadership Association and is chair of the ILA's 2006 international leadership conference in Chicago.

ON THE COVER

This issue's cover was designed by HeLyong (Nikkie) Li, a senior majoring in graphic design at Columbia College Chicago. A North Korean from Hokkaido, Japan, Nikkie can be reached at na_na_song@hotmail.com

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First Come, First Served: Who's Served?

BY SUSAN FLEISCHMANN
AND GINNY BERKOWITZ

One of the traditional cornerstones of the public access movement is the concept of first come, first served—that everyone is treated the same and has equal access to resources. But the idea, regardless of its benign intent, is flawed at its core. Not everyone has equal access, due to barriers of race, class, language, and sense of self in the greater society, among other reasons.

Most of us aren't even aware of the barriers in our organizations. Following are some suggestions for making your access center more open to the participation of people from all backgrounds and concerns.

▲ Dispense with time-consuming needs assessments and take a look around your access center and the community you serve: Who is missing? Why? What can you do about it?

▲ The leadership of your organization (staff and board of directors) must represent your community. This will go a long way in ensuring that your policies and procedures consider the needs of a diverse constituency—and it is a signal that you are serious about including and involving everyone.

▲ Identify key leaders and organizations that serve the constituencies that you want to reach. Talk to them about the needs of their communities and how your access center and your channels can address those needs.

▲ If you are planning to do targeted outreach, do some homework to make sure that when people respond, you are prepared. Be willing to tailor your programs to meet their needs. Think about how to deepen your connection to their community.

▲ Make sure that from the moment that people walk through your door, they feel welcomed, valued, and respected.

▲ Getting started is the hardest part. Small well-planned pilot projects are very useful. This gives you a chance to see if what you intended worked or if you need to tweak your program design to better meet the need of your targeted group. Once you have some success, others will be more likely to see your center as a

One of the traditional cornerstones of the public access movement is the concept of first come, first served—that everyone is treated the same and has equal access to resources. But the idea, regardless of its benign intent, is flawed at its core.

resource and a place where they are welcome.

▲ Finally, use every means at your disposal to deepen the connection: distribute participants' work, include folks in the advisory/decision-making process of your organization, highlight their involvement in your newsletter or other public events, and, most importantly, shepherd these newbies through the complex world of making media at your facility, encouraging them to try new ways to get their message out.

Here are some outreach programs for seniors, youth, immigrants, and other low-income communities that started small and have become part of the ongoing training program at Cambridge Community Television (CCTV) in Massachusetts:

▲ **COMPUTERS FOR SENIORS** was created to meet the need for a technology program for Cambridge's elders—flexible, paced for each individual, and meaningful. Computers for Seniors has been meeting every Monday morning, without fail, since 1999.

"At CCTV...I made a movie about my experience...It was quite a challenge and accomplishment," says Marie Caso, Computers for Seniors participant.

"Since I still have more to say, as do many of my peers, nothing would please me more than to repeat the experience and share it with future generations." Marie's story may be found at www.cctvcambridge.org/stream/ under Member Videos.

▲ The **MANY VOICES PROJECT** was created to help Cambridge's immigrant communities and specifically targets speakers of Haitian Kreyol, Spanish, and Portuguese. The program offers ongoing sessions that meet three hours weekly, providing students intensive technology and media-making training, practice time, and one-on-one help with specific

questions in a multi-lingual environment.

"When I first moved to this country, I worked long hours...and I didn't have time to invest in improving myself with new skills...Fortunately, I have found that there are people who will help me in my journey. I have to accept the reality that I can no longer work in the way I used to do when I was young, but my mind is still strong and I am sure that I will be successful someday with my new computer skills. I now have new possibilities for my future that I never dreamed of before..." says Fedor Hernandez, Many Voices Project participant. Fedor's story, in English and Spanish, may be found under Member Videos at www.cctvcambridge.org/stream/

▲ The **SUMMER MEDIA INSTITUTE (SMI)**, an annual project sponsored by CCTV for high school students, is held in collaboration with the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program. Each year, 12 high school students participate in an intensive program designed to develop video production skills while focusing on community issues. Participants meet four hours a day for six weeks to become proficient in all aspects of media production and presentation. This past year's theme took advantage of the Democratic National Convention to raise awareness of participatory democracy, voting, and an informed electorate.

"It's really not the way people think it is...there is really nothing to be afraid of," explained SMI participant Max Barnes. His story is under Youth Member Video at www.cctvcambridge.org/stream/

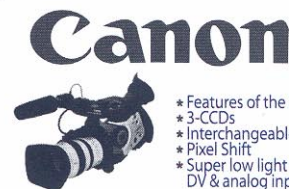
Other profiles appear on page 51 of this issue of *CMR*.

Susan Fleischmann [susan@cctvcambridge.org], is executive director of Cambridge Community Television. **Ginny Berkowitz** [ginny@cctvcambridge.org], former director of outreach and development at CCTV, is now program manager for Cambridge Educational Access.



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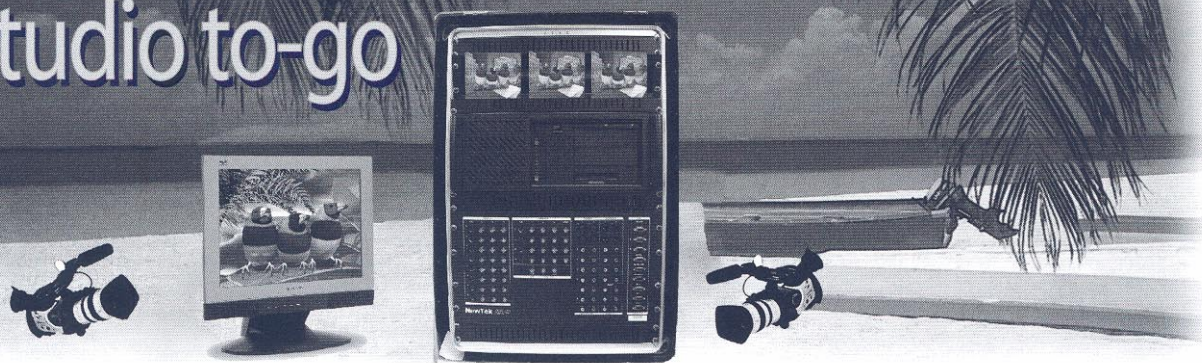
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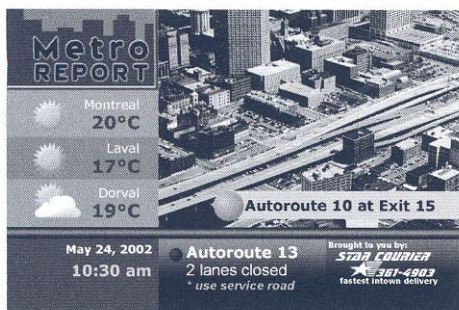
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Mogadishu to Minneapolis: Minnesota Somalis Find a Television Home at MTN

BY JOHN AKRE

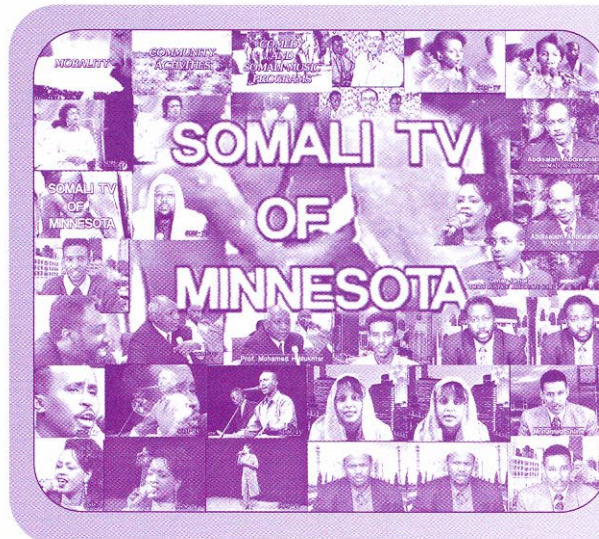
Minnesota, and specifically the Twin Cities metropolitan area, is home to one of the largest settlements of Somali people outside of Somalia. You would never know this if broadcast television was your only window into the community, for you rarely see Somali culture represented there. Programming in the Somali language is completely absent from local commercial television.

But on cable TV, particularly in the city of Minneapolis, on any night you will hear Somali voices and see the faces of Somalis reporting about their community, performing Somali music, and passing on religious instruction, something vitally important to the deeply religious Somali community. The Minneapolis Television Network (MTN), which provides public access TV for the city of Minneapolis, programs eight hours of Somali language programs each week. Together, programs on the African immigrant and Muslim experience represent over five percent of the programming on MTN's three public access channels.

Abdulkadir Osman fled Somalia in 1993 to escape the civil war. Now he lives far from Somalia, in Columbia Heights, a suburb just over the border of northeast Minneapolis. When he leaves his house in the morning to go to work, his eight children are still all sleeping. Getting to his job at the St. Paul Elementary School where he works as a bilingual educator means taking off at 6:00 am. When he gets back home from his second job, teaching adult high school at the Volunteers of America in Minneapolis, it is nearly 11 p.m., and his youngest children are already in bed.

Holding down two jobs is not unusual for members of the Twin Cities Somali community. But what Osman does between his jobs, from noon to 5:00 p.m. almost every weekday, is unique. He spends that time working on the two one-hour Somali TV shows that he produces as a volunteer every week.

In 1997 he was working at the Hennepin County Medical Center as an interpreter and cultural consultant. While



...in the city of Minneapolis, on any night you will hear Somali voices and see the faces of Somalis reporting about their community, performing Somali music, and passing on religious instruction, something vitally important to the deeply religious Somali community.

there he helped members of the Twin Cities Somali community navigate the health care system, but he was only able to work with about four people a day. That was just a drop in the bucket for a local Somali community that official estimates put at over 20,000 members. According to Osman, the real number of local Somalis is more than twice that number.

Because of his background in teaching, Osman knew how important it was for new immigrants to have some kind of "bridge" to help them adapt to their new home. Through his work at Hennepin County, he knew that one-on-one instruction could never address his community's many growing needs.

It was when he was visiting a friend's house that he saw a peculiar gray box that had "MTN" stenciled on it. Inside the box was some kind of video camera. Osman asked his friend where the box was from, and that is how he discovered public access television. When he visited the studios of MTN a few days later, he knew that he had discovered a way he could help thousands of people bridge the cultural gap.

Almost as soon as he finished his first class at MTN, Osman was producing a weekly show called *Somali TV*. For the first year, he made the shows working alone. In his second year he started building a crew of local Somali residents who

liked what they saw and wanted to help. One of those early crewmembers, Abdi Abdiaar, went on to make another show, *Somali Life*.

"One hour wasn't enough for our community," Abdi explains. Not long after Abdi started producing *Somali Life*, Osman began producing a second hour of *Somali TV* every week. Osman works with a strong volunteer crew now, and that makes the work easier, though all members of the crew work hard. Siad Said Salah is a regular at many Somali events recording field video, while Mohamed Shino and Mohamud Mas'ade share the job of anchoring and writing the news casts.

Abdi works a graphic design job, studies journalism and helps raise his two children when he isn't working on *Somali Life*. He says that his show, with its comedy and music segments, appeals to a younger audience than *Somali TV*. *Somali TV* also includes music, but balances the entertainment with Somali community news and religious instruction.

A regular feature of *Somali Life* is the comedy of Padri. Abdi calls Padri "the Somali Chris Rock," and Padri explains that he joined the show when he told Abdi that a comedian featured on *Somali Life* wasn't very funny, and he could do better. Padri fashions his jokes and stories on the challenges that Somalis have coping with U.S. and Minnesota culture.

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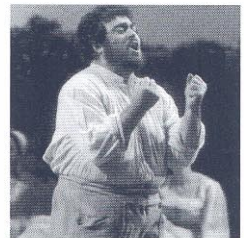
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The volunteers who produce the shows at MTN are local celebrities in the Somali community. Abdi explains, "I don't know a lot of people myself, but anywhere I go where there are other Somalis, they know me." He says that his 80-year-old mother knows very few English words, but she does know "MTN," and she knows exactly where to turn her dial to find the Somali programming.

Osman says that callers to the Somali TV voice mail often find that they can't leave comments because the mailbox is full. "The community relies on us and expects the programs to keep coming," he explains. He gets complaints if he re-runs a program, so he always has pressure to keep things fresh.

The importance of the Somali community programs both for the local Somali community and also Minneapolis was recognized earlier this year when the *City Pages*, an alternative newspaper, named *Somali TV* the "Best Public Access Cable TV Program" in its "Best of the Twin Cities" issue. In the article about the honor, the *City Pages* said, "For some, public access is an early, inspiring lesson in democracy and free media."

Some of the programs are made with the assistance of Somali mutual assistance organizations. Osman produces *Somali TV* with the assistance of the Confederation of Somali Community in Minnesota, an organization that provides social services like language classes and employment counseling. The Somali Mai Community of Minnesota is an organization that produces a weekly show in the Somali Mai language. The Somali Bantu people, who speak this language, represent some of the most recent immigration to Minnesota.

Both Abdi and Osman say that the single most important reason that they do their work at MTN, and not at another access center, is the MTN staff. They both claim that the MTN staff is particularly



J.C. Bagdadi (left) accepts an award of appreciation on behalf of MTN from members of the Confederation of Somali Community.

understanding of the needs of immigrant producers, and goes out of its way to welcome them.

In fact, two members of the MTN staff who originally helped the Somali producers get started are also from Islamic countries. J.C. Bagdadi, senior production manager at MTN, left Libya when he was a young man. Mustafa Tell, who taught Osman's first studio production class, is from Jordan, where he now once again lives and works.

MTN Executive Director Pam Colby says, "Sensitivity to the cultural traditions,



Somali TV producers [left to right] Abdulkadir Osman and Siad Said Salah.

language and background of new immigrant producers is something that MTN has attempted to build into its staff." Bagdadi regularly informs the non-Islamic members of the staff about upcoming Islamic holidays, like Ramadan, and traditions, like the importance of prayer and the need Islamic producers may have for a place and time to pray. Bagdadi also helps staff understand

some of the content of the Somali programs which, after all, are in the Somali language.

"MTN has a wonderful staff ready to help you, any minute, any second, whether you are alone or with a group," Osman says.

Bagdadi calls Saturdays at MTN "Mogadishu Day" after the capital city of Somalia. On Saturday afternoons, MTN's two studios are often both filled with Somali production activity. A Somali singer, maybe from the local area, sometimes from Somalia, might perform in front of a blue screen scene

from Somali. One of the local Somali anchors, looking as official as any commercial TV personality, might be reading a Somali language recap of local news. A religious leader might be giving advice and instruction in front of a blue screen temple. And the Somali crews, giving instructions in the Somali language, set up the lighting, camera shots and effects, and direct the shows.

Producers representing a number of different Somali programs collaborated recently on a special Ramadan call-in show. Bagdadi helped bring the Somali producers together for this two-hour live extravaganza, and Osman, recognized as the senior member of the local Somali television community, directed the show. Liban Hussein, on the crew of the Somali Mai Community program, developed the content of the show together with Abdi and *Somali TV*'s Mohamed Shino. Although they may be from clans fighting against each other in Somalia's civil war, they were able to joke and work together under the pressure and excitement of putting together a live TV show at MTN.

"To do these shows would cost us thousands of dollars, but here we make them for no money, for our community," Osman says.

Author John Akre [jakre@mtn.org] is a production specialist and instructor at the Minneapolis Television Network.

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MACRO SYSTEM

Native Lens: Media Literacy, Critical Thinking and Digital Filmmaking for Youth

BY ANNIE SILVERSTEIN

• *The past hundred years of filmmaking have virtually ignored the true identity of Native people. Many damaging stereotypes have grown from Hollywood's image of the American Indian and left tribes without a voice. It is time for those voices to be heard.*•

— BEN-ALEX DUPRIS, *Seattle Native* filmmaker and Native Lens guest artist

There are shouts and cheers as the lights go down in the little theater, and then a silence falls over the young audience in eager anticipation of what they are about to see. For the first time, 30 youth from the Swinomish tribe are going to watch stories on the big screen that only they can tell. The sound of traditional drumming and singing by the group Eagleheart fades in through the speakers, and suddenly images of Native youth taking cameras into their own hands fill the screen.

In May 2004, The Young Producers Project at 911 Media Arts Center in Washington state launched *Native Lens*, a series of programs that offer training in media literacy, critical thinking, and digital filmmaking to Native youth. Seed money for *Native Lens* came from the prestigious 21st Century Literacy Initiative Grant awarded by the Time Warner Foundation in the summer of 2003. For the last seven years the Young Producers Project has created youth media programs that target young people whose culture, race, or gender are under-represented in the media-making scene.

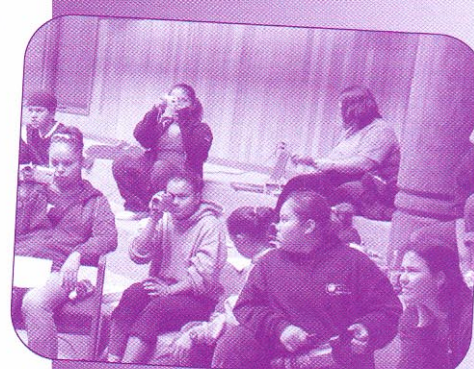
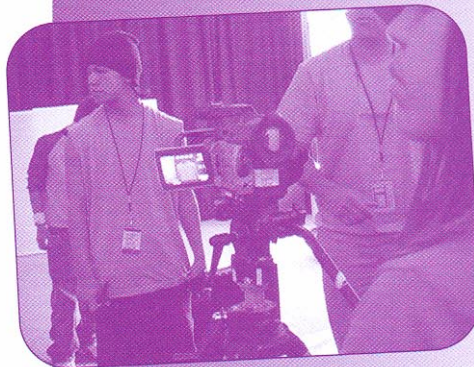
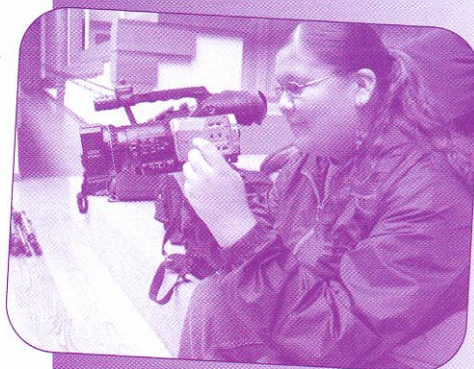
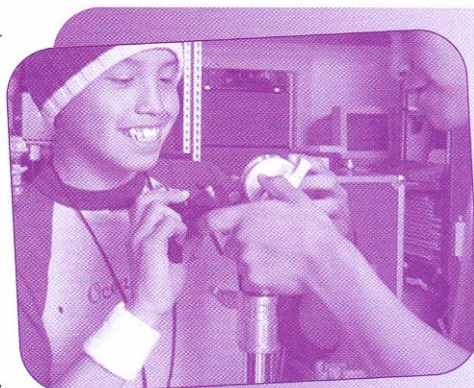
Our nationally acclaimed program *Reel Grrls* mentors young women between the ages of 14 and 19 in media technology skills and digital storytelling. A major component of *Reel Grrls* is teaching participants how to watch movies and television with a critical eye, initiating an examination of representation and media's impact on society. Through our experiences in developing youth media programs we have found that learning about media literacy and digital filmmaking as a form of self-expression is an

extremely thought provoking and empowering experience for young people in underserved communities.

The Native American community in the Pacific Northwest is particularly absent from the larger media-making scene, yet its cultural traditions are rich with stories, images, and activism. While the Young Producers Project has been successful in reaching diverse youth populations in the past, they have primarily been African American, Asian, and Latino. We realized that in order to engage tribal youth in our community we needed to develop a media program that was culturally specific.

In 2003 we were contacted by the Swinomish tribe, whose reservation is located an hour and a half north of Seattle in La Connor, Washington. The Swinomish, like many surrounding tribes, had received a technology grant designed to "wire the reservation." While they had a couple of cameras, an editing system, and even their own PEG channel, they had little training in how to use the technology and their PEG channel was dark. After our preliminary discussions, when the Swinomish realized what was possible in terms of content, the tribe expressed interest in building a cable station so they could broadcast their own programs on the reservation. Once we were awarded the funds to launch *Native Lens*, we decided to partner with the Swinomish to help them start up their station, offer youth media workshops, and develop a program model that we could then offer to other interested tribes.

Youth from the Swinomish tribe were extremely excited to participate in the *Native Lens* program. While meeting in their Spiritual Center one night to discuss the upcoming program, we asked them to fill out a survey about what kinds of movies they like to watch and what movies they would like to make when given the opportunity. There was a resounding response. "If I could make a movie about anything it would be about Indians," said Sweetie Edwards, 16. "I



A LETTER FROM A PARENT OF ONE OF THE *NATIVE LENS* PARTICIPANTS

Congratulations, a job well done. Please forward this to the team. I have heard nothing but good news about the Native Lens Conference from the Swinomish People.

I called from Canada and asked my wife how it went and only had limited time, so I asked her, between one and 10, how the conference went. She said "it was a 10." My son enjoyed it and gave it great reviews. Tribal Senate Member Barb James said it was phenomenal. She explained that the kids who had broken relationships with each other resolved those conflicts at the conference. I don't see much of Barb James because of her busy schedule; however, she was the first person I saw Monday morning with the video, sharing what a great event it was.

Kids' responses were the same. They were visiting my office, asking

why I didn't go and telling me how much fun I had missed. Again I would have loved to have experienced it and I send my apologies. I am committed to this program and to helping the kids develop their skills and dreams. I thank you for your commitment. Thank you for planting a seed of hope and dreams for the Swinomish Youth. I look forward to sitting down with your team and reflecting and setting goals for the future so that we can build on the momentum that you and your team have started. Thank you again and as the Swinomish Culture has taught me: I raise my hands out in front of me and say "O-CIUM" (spelling wrong) but it means "Thank You."


Thanks,
Frank Dunn

would make a movie about my heritage and the life of Natives," said Amy Edwards, 16. "I would make a movie about the Swinomish tribe," said Alice Charles. "I would make a movie about break dancing and Natives," said Shauntia Cayou, 14. When asked what their favorite movie was, over half of the group answered *Smoke Signals*. Written by Sherman Alexie and directed by Chris Eyre, *Smoke Signals* was released in 1998 and was one of the first Native-made films to break into the mainstream and attract a large Native and non-Native audience.

Smoke Signals is the story of two young men, Thomas and Victor, who leave their reservation to retrieve the ashes of Victor's father Arnold, who left his family 10 years earlier. The movie gives a humorous, sad, and loving portrayal of "res life," one with which many of the young people from the Swinomish tribe identify. As one of the tribal leaders told me, "These kids could probably tell you every line from that movie." Given the absence of Native images in the media, the Swinomish youth were ready to step up and create their own representations.

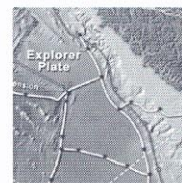
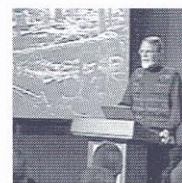
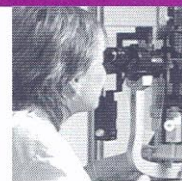
During the premier *Native Lens* work-

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shop in May, Swinomish participants bused from their reservation to Seattle to spend the weekend working with local Native filmmakers and special guest actors Cody Lightning (*Smoke Signals*), Eddie Spears (ABC's *Dreamkeepers*), and Elaine Miles (*Northern Exposure*). They explored images of American Indians in the media, and learned the technical and artistic skills needed to create their own narratives. Over the course of two days they shot and edited four shorts: *Behind the Scenes of Native Lens*, a short documentary about the weekend events; *Ko-Kwal-Awoot: The Maiden of Deception Pass*, a traditional totem story told using stop-motion animation; a scene from the screenplay *Nineteen*, starring guest actors Cody and Eddie; and *Native Pride: More Than What You Think*, a PSA that challenges the stereotypes young American Indians face daily.

What is so striking about the shorts the youth produced, is that not only did they tell their own stories, which we rarely hear, but in doing so they used media technology as a form of cultural preservation. So much of Native history and culture has been passed down from generation to generation through storytelling. Though these stories, languages, and customs have withstood massacres, dispossession of land, and hundreds of years of oppression, the struggle remains to keep them alive. *Native Lens* offers youth the technical skills they need to use media technology as a 21st century storytelling tool, one that can capture and preserve their languages, customs, history, and traditions.

Digital storytelling also gives Native young people a way to express their youth culture and identity. This is wonderfully encapsulated in the *Native Pride* PSA that deals with stereotypes. Swinomish youth took turns facing the camera and making personal statements: "Since I'm Indian you probably think that I've already dropped out of school, but I've kept my grades up and plan to go to the UW for college," states Amanda Hansen looking squarely into the camera. "You probably think I'm a druggie and an alcoholic just because I'm Native. You may think you know me, but nobody knows you but yourself, and sometimes you don't even know yourself. I plan to finish high school and go to college and do something with my

life, Peace," says Nick Clark. The background music mixes in and out between a traditional Native drumming group and a rap song by Jay-Z. The piece exemplifies the multiple layers of meaning the youth expressed through their video; they have pride in their heritage, they are tired of being stereotyped, but they also identify with a younger urban hip hop culture their elders are most likely disconnected from. Expressing an appreciation of their roots in the landscape and style of the current times is what makes the short so poignant and moving to audiences.

We are currently in the midst of our Native Lens Film Institute—a four-month program for 10 students that provides in-depth technology training, storytelling development, and one-on-one mentoring opportunities. Guided by Native filmmakers, students will turn their ideas into works of artistic distinction, which will be screened on the reservation, at youth and other film festivals, and archived as part of tribal history. The youth who participate in this program will be integral to the development of ongoing, on-res programming, through peer-teaching and leadership. Our hope is to provide a comprehensive *Native Lens* curriculum and teacher's guide to the tribe at the conclusion of the four-month program so that the tribe is able to sustain youth media production at its own facilities.

The *Native Lens* program has had an impact throughout the tribal leadership of the Swinomish nation. The tribe has begun to allocate funding and staff to provide programming to their PEG channel, which has the capacity to cablecast on the reservation and in the greater La Conner Community. With guidance and technical expertise from Media Services and Technology Manager Corey Contreras, the tribe has developed a communications department that will incorporate video production and coverage of tribal events for broadcast on SWIN 96. But who will run the cameras and who will conduct the interviews? *Native Lens* youth participants will have their first free lance jobs.

Annie Silverstein [annie@911media.org] is program director for *Native Lens* and other youth programs at 911 Media Arts Center in Seattle, Washington.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES

911 Media Arts Center is Washington State's largest nonprofit organization supporting the creative use of media as both communication and artistic expression. Our mission is to provide access to and promote participation in the media arts and by doing so, provide the ideas and resources necessary to empower and educate people through that media.

One of the clear realizations that our staff experienced as the result of working outside of our own mainstream culture was the need for more people of color on the ground working within community-based media. The *Native Lens* program requires working within a sovereign nation that shares painful history with America. One of the significant barriers to participation and external collaboration is an inherent mistrust of outside influences. Add to that the fact that we asked to work with their children. It was important to us to build trust within the community in order to share our knowledge. In exchange, we have gained critical cultural awareness, which helps us shape the program to better meet the needs of the youth in meaningful ways. The development of the program with Native artists and mentors is critical to its eventual success.

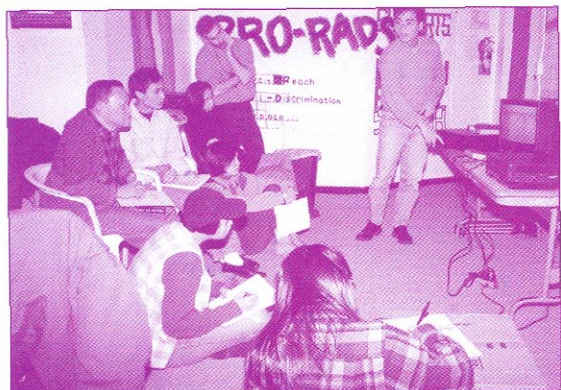
This scenario applies not only to work within tribal communities, but also in other communities of color. Too many times, organizations think, "if we build it, they will come." This notion is supported by foundations and other funders whose outcome-based models of funding may not take into account the cultural competency and trust building necessary to launch and maintain a successful program within a particular "underserved" community. Additionally, these communities need outreach, which literally requires an organization to go out and reach. This could mean months of sitting in community meetings, prayer sessions, football games, sobriety meetings, and the like, to strengthen our cultural awareness with regard to method and approach. All this must happen long before a successful program can be designed. More importantly, the program must be designed not only with the community in mind, but also at the table.

MNN's Community Media Grants: Supporting the Cultural and Social Interests of Manhattan

BY RICK JUNGERS

Through the Community Media Grant, Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN) works and partners with Manhattan nonprofit and grassroots organizations to use media to facilitate community dialog, foster local artistic and cultural expressions, provide local perspectives in areas of the public interest, facilitate a more media literate community, and develop a community media infrastructure.

A major goal of the grant is to create internal capacity. MNN is not interested in hiring 'video professionals' to create programming for an organization, but rather in developing capacity within funded organizations so they can "speak for themselves." The grant is available to nonprofit organizations based in and providing services to the Borough of Manhattan. Since 1992 nearly \$3 million have been allocated to approximately 70 Manhattan-based organizations.



Members of Chinese Staff & Workers reviewing footage from *Organizing for Justice Against Silver Palace*.

The grant places video instructors and mentors within an organization to train its staff and/or volunteers to utilize video to tell their own stories, from their own perspectives. MNN also provides production and post-production equipment on site to facilitate production activity independent from the access center. With the advent of digital video and computerized editing solutions like FinalCut Pro, it has become more economically feasible to foster this type of self-sufficiency.

The grants have allowed MNN to support many organizations contributing to

the cultural and social well-being of Manhattan. Here are just a few examples of some of the organizations funded and the projects they have undertaken.

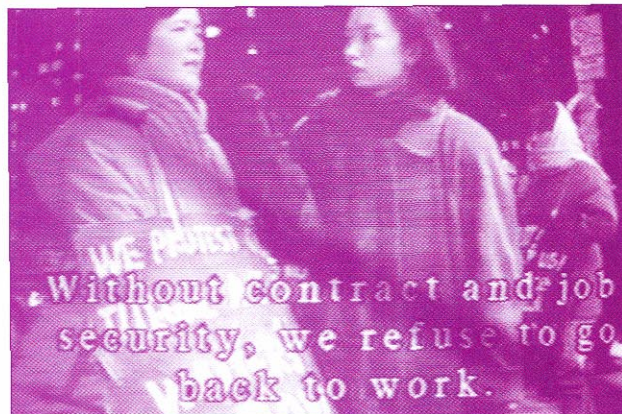
CHINESE STAFF & WORKERS ASSOCIATION

Chinese immigrants make up one of the fastest growing populations in Manhattan. Lured by images of wealth and opportunity, many immigrants assume huge debts to come to New York, legally and illegally. Once here they are channeled into undocumented and unregulated work in the garment, restaurant and construction industries and are routinely forced to work 70 to 100 hours per week without benefits, overtime compensation or even minimum wage.

Founded in 1979, the Chinese Staff & Workers Association is one of the first community-based worker's organizations in the country. CSWA is dedicated to organizing immigrant workers to advance justice and dignity within the workplace, developing voices to challenge the sweatshop system, and promoting worker leadership and empowerment in the struggle for economic and social justice.

CSWA, which started with mostly male restaurant workers, has expanded its membership of over 1,300 to include garment and construction workers, caregivers, disabled workers, retirees, youth, documented and undocumented workers. CSWA has developed an internal leadership composed primarily of women.

In 1992 the Chinese Staff & Workers association was one of the first 10 organizations to receive a grant from MNN. Armed with S-VHS camcorders and a "portable" linear straight-cut edit system the project began training members to produce tapes addressing sweatshop con-



Screen shot from Chinese Staff & Workers "Organizing for Justice Against Silver Palace."

ditions, immigrant worker's rights and other community concerns.

During a worker organizing campaign to secure withheld wages and health care benefits and to resolve other workplace problems, more than 30 workers were locked out of the Chinatown restaurant where they were employed. The video project produced a documentary covering the seven-month struggle of the workers. They covered the rallies and daily pickets outside the restaurant, interviewed workers and immigrant labor activists, and critiqued the mainstream media coverage. Portions of the video were used to organize other workers and galvanize support for their struggles. The project developed videos in English with Cantonese subtitles and versions in Cantonese with English subtitles. Ultimately the workers prevailed (only to suffer setbacks later) and the completed video, *Organizing for Justice Against Silver Palace*, won a Hometown Video Festival award for best documentary in 1994.

CSWA has produced many documentaries on Chinese immigrant life and worker struggles, produced the bi-weekly *CSWA News* and started a youth video program. While they no longer receive funding from MNN they continue to use video as an integral component of their organizing activities.

HOUSING WORKS

Housing Works is a minority-controlled, community-based, nonprofit corporation providing housing, healthcare, advocacy, job training, and vital support-

ive services to New Yorkers living with HIV and AIDS who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. As part of the creative arts therapy program at its East 9th Street location, Housing Works has launched the Video Project, an innovative therapeutic and skills development program. The Video Project offers instructional workshops where Housing Works' clients are trained to conceive, write and produce original videos. The Video Project conducts camera workshops and editing workshops throughout the year, culminating in screening events where clients present their work to their peers and to the general public. One of the components of their work is *The Living Legacy Project*, where clients compose "video letters" for their family and loved ones. (Participants can choose whether or not to share their work with a broader public.)

After six years of funding, their last grant was used to upgrade and purchase digital production equipment. This, along with a commitment by the organization to continue funding the personnel costs of the program, will sustain the project independent of future MNN funding.

TEPEYAC TELEVISION

MNN funding to Asociación Tepeyac de Nueva York supports the Tepeyac Television Service, developed to serve the undocumented Latino immigrant community in New York City.

The Tepeyac Television Service trains young adult immigrants to use video to tell their stories. TTS produces programs utilizing image and sound manipulation, animation and experimental narrative techniques to speak to the lives of young Latino immigrants as they encounter and adapt to their new surroundings. One program provided a critique of U.S. immigration policy by using the words from a President George W. Bush immigration speech juxtaposed with images of immigrant workers in the U.S., border crossings, and corporate/social icons. Programs produced by the project are cablecast bi-weekly on MNN and broadcast monthly on channel 7 in Guadalajara, Mexico.

DOMINICAN WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT CENTER AND ALIANZA DOMINICANA

One of New York's largest Latino populations is composed of immigrants from the Dominican Republic. A large percent-

age of NYC's Dominicans live in northern Manhattan in the Inwood and Washington Heights communities. MNN has provided funding to two organizations to bring resources to these communities.

At the Dominican Women's Development Center, the Chrysalis Project supports the growth and development of Dominican and other Latina women by bringing them together and helping them seek solutions to the problems that affect their lives, stressing self-sufficiency and shared ownership. The project is a pre-professional video production program providing training for Latina women in the field of video production, with an emphasis on skills and strategies participants will be able to utilize should they choose to pursue a career in video production. The Chrysalis Project allows the women to give voice to issues



Students in video class at Alianza Dominicana's La Plaza Beacon School.

and concerns important to them and to share their ideas with the larger community.

Alianza Dominicana, Inc. is a non-profit community development organization, whose mission is to assist children, youth and families to break the cycle of poverty and fulfill their potential as members of the wider community. Founded in 1982, Alianza develops model initiatives that use comprehensive and integrated services to resolve families' multiple needs. With support from MNN, Alianza has been providing video training classes through its La Plaza Video Project since 1993 and a studio production facility to the community since 1995. More than a thousand community residents have been trained in video production techniques since the program's inception. Based out of Alianza's La Plaza facility, the

La Plaza Beacon School is one of 10 original, nationally acclaimed Beacon Initiative school-based community centers in the United States.

THE LAVENDER & GREEN ALLIANCE

The Lavender & Green Alliance (LGA) is dedicated to supporting and honoring the lives of Irish and Irish American lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. With MNN support, Alliance members produced a series of oral history videos in the *From Silence to Speech Project*.

Remembering Robert was one of nine LGA programs produced over a two-year period. The program featured a conversation with Stanley and Kathleen Rygor, parents of prominent New York AIDS activist and ACT-UP spokesperson Robert Rygor. In *Remembering Robert*, the Rygors, from the living room of their New York home, candidly recount the chal-

lenges of homophobia and AIDS they faced as they came to terms with their son's sexual orientation, AIDS diagnosis, and tragic death. *Remembering Robert* is a story of healing and reconciliation and the transformation of a father's grief into action for change.

These are only a few of the many extraordinary projects MNN has funded over the years. It is a tribute to MNN's Board of Directors and leadership that as budgetary constraints grow MNN has continued to support the

Community Media Grants program.

MNN is extremely fortunate to have the funding in place to support this program. However, other organizations can replicate the model. The key components of the project feature training and mentoring that is sympathetic to the realities and needs of the organizations being served in addition to the allocation of production resources placed on-site. With a camcorder, eMac, targeted training and minimal operational support, this type of activity can be replicated in other communities.

Rick Jungers [rick@mnn.org] edited this article drawing upon material from the featured organizations. Rick is the director of community media for Manhattan Neighborhood Network. More information on the grant program can be found at www.mnn.org/cm

Immigrants Find Help through CAN TV

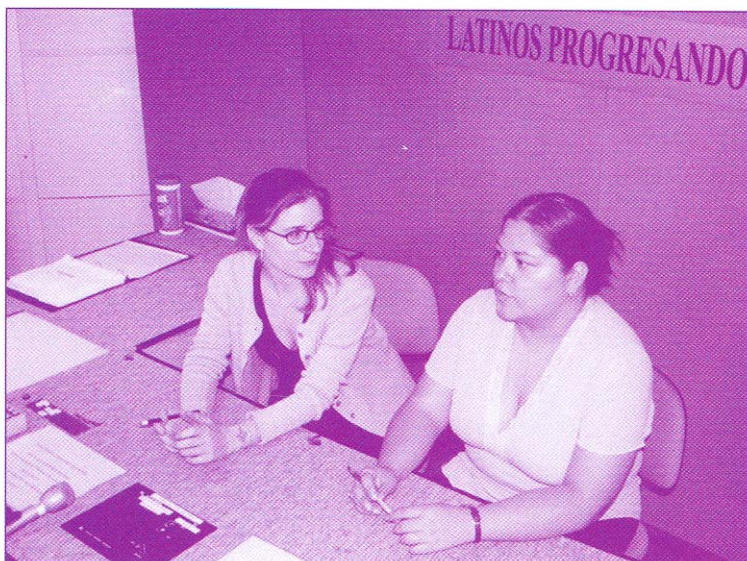
BY BARBARA POPOVIC
AND RAVEN PATTERSON

Chicago history is rich in immigrant culture. Neighborhoods, street names, storefronts, arts events, festivals and parades all signify the multi-ethnic character of the city. Today there are approximately 1.1 million immigrants in the Chicago area. Their labor, loves and struggles are captured in dance, song, and the works of local authors like Carl Sandburg, Nelson Algren and Studs Terkel.

While the arts raise awareness by tapping the muse of immigrant life, over 60 immigration agencies in Chicago work to address the daily challenges that newcomers face. These agencies inform people about citizenship and residency applications, warn about fraudulent immigration practices, and provide needed information about a host of other concerns. In Chicago, legalization of undocumented immigrants is a key issue, particularly with the large and growing population of Latino workers. These workers are often victimized in the day labor market. A 2002 University of Illinois at Chicago study found that undocumented workers contribute \$5.45 billion to Chicago's economy. But these workers don't have basic rights like holding a driver's license or joining a union.

According to the U.S. Immigrants Census 2000, one in nine U.S. residents and one in seven U.S. workers are immigrants. One in five children in the U.S. is an immigrant or has immigrant parents and one in four poor children is the child of an immigrant. Immigrants are vulnerable to a backlash in a poor economy suffering from job loss. Communities with a large immigrant population are challenged with discrimination in housing. And since 9/11, immigrants from the Arab and Muslim communities throughout the country have been subjected to hate crimes, assault, and more subtle forms of discrimination.

In the spring of 2001, CAN TV piloted



Sarah Waxman (left) and Deyanira Gutierrez of Latinos Progresando address a caller's question on CAN TV's Immigration Issues.

a program called *Immigration Issues* on CAN TV21. This live call-in half-hour series appeared weekly for a month, with a particular emphasis on explaining Section 245(I) applications for permanent residence introduced in the House as H.R. 1885. During the four weeks of the program, local agencies took calls, disseminated information and made referrals. Despite the fact that the series was launched without promotion, the calls flowed in, demonstrating the importance of addressing issues relating to the immigrant community.

As a result of that first series, in October of 2001, CAN TV initiated a regular weekly live call-in program with four local agencies rotating as hosts. In the three years that the series has existed, over 80 hours of live programming have been completed. Participating groups have included World Relief, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Centro Sin Fronteras, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant & Refugee Rights, Asian Human Services, Latinos Progresando, DePaul Legal Clinic, Chicago Legal Clinic and Midwest Immigrant Rights Center.

Some of the experts that host *Immigration Issues* speak multiple languages or have guests who can handle inquiries in another language. Callers make inquiries in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, German, Chinese and

other languages. Typical questions focus on obtaining a green card, citizenship, or a social security number, and obtaining or renewing a work permit. The program provides a forum for agencies to answer questions about pending legislation and to provide updates and education about changes in immigration law and policy.

Immigration agencies that host the program recognize the need to get accurate information to the public. Where you have immigrants, you have scammers trying to bilk the unsuspecting out of their savings.

Such scams often end in deportation. According to Carol Pelton, director of immigration programs at Chicago Legal Clinic, *Immigration Issues* on CAN TV21 provides a place that people can call anonymously and get reliable information without risks.

Several success stories have come out of doing the program. Chicago Legal Clinic assisted a woman who was able to break free from an abusive spouse and to gain legalization. World Relief has had success in keeping families together that were threatened with deportation. Agency representatives note that every week someone is set on the road to getting residency.

Immigration Issues is a way to bypass communications roadblocks and reach people with help and referrals. Education is key in the post 9/11 environment of fear and distrust that has permeated much of the immigrant community. CAN TV connects a capable and committed community of immigration service groups with people in need of assistance. Ana Maria Soto, director of cultural affairs at Columbia College, says emphatically, "It's a great public service."

Barbara Popovic [popovicb@cantv.org] is executive director and **Raven Patterson** [nonprofitservices@cantv.org] is manager of nonprofit services of CAN TV in Chicago, Illinois. Information on CAN TV nonprofit services and programming is available at www.cantv.org.

San Lucas Workers Center Tackles Abuses

BY GREG BOOZELL

Among the least understood issues in today's economy is its dependence on low-wage domestic employment. The outsourcing of jobs to lower-wage countries is commonly discussed in the press and was even raised as an issue in the last presidential political campaign. However, the domestic trend to convert living wage jobs to temporary, low-paying work receives considerably less public attention. While workers have traditionally depended upon major corporations as a source of secure employment, increasingly these companies have depended upon day labor employment as part of their human resource strategy.

Chicago is no exception to this trend. While the city provides a destination for many immigrants seeking a better life, it also serves as a home to companies that exploit the ample supply of immigrant labor in dead-end, low-wage employment. In order to challenge the abuses of the day labor industry, the San Lucas Workers Center (SLWC) was formed in 2002. The SLWC is a committee of U.S. born and immigrant workers, as well as community members who act in solidarity with the workers. SLWC's operating principles embody a class-based conception of organizing and the organization is firmly committed to worker-driven decision making and autonomy.

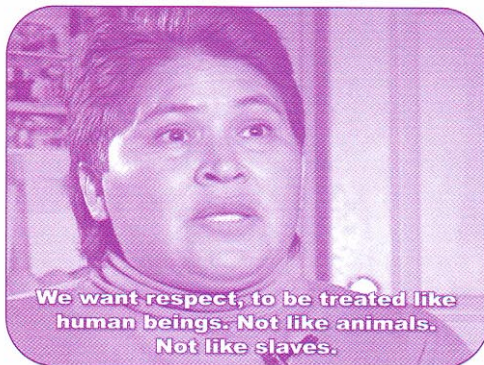
Acknowledging the importance of media creation and participation, SLWC formed a partnership in 2002 with Chicago Access Network TV (CAN TV) to train workers to produce a video on the abuses of Chicago's day labor industry. The project was made possible in part by support from the Crossroads Fund.

Workers participated in scripting, shooting and editing the piece. From the start, an important tenet of the project was to have the workers tell their own stories. Rather than rely on interviews with staff organizers or other people who advo-

cate on behalf of workers, the group deliberately chose to only feature day labor workers in the video.

This choice served two ends. First, conducting the interviews with workers helped those workers to better develop the skills needed to articulate their positions on the issue. Second, since the video featured workers, the video held greater legitimacy and appeal when it was later used to organize new day laborers.

In the video, SLWC Worker/Leader, Mario Johnson narrates the piece and walks the viewer through an examination of the conditions faced by day laborers. Interviews with workers detail their challenges but also point to the need to organize and challenge injustice collectively. The group deliberately chose to include a broad range of day laborers including both immigrant and U.S. born, male and female, and English and Spanish-speaking workers.



San Lucas Workers Center member Raquel Arroyo describes the unfair and illegal working conditions faced by day laborers in Chicago.

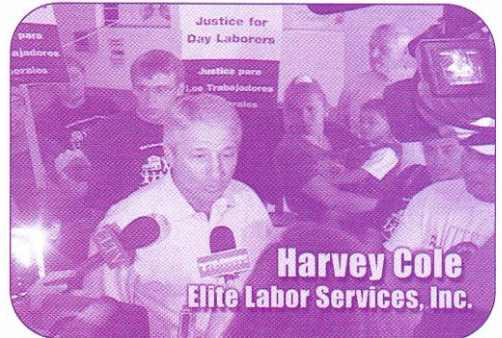
Playing U.S. born workers against immigrant laborers is one of the corrupt practices of day labor agencies. For example, it's not uncommon for day labor employers to specifically request immigrant workers for job assignments. These illegal requests are

based in the belief that immigrant workers are easier to exploit since, fearing deportation, many immigrant workers hesitate to complain about unsafe or illegal working conditions. The apparent favor granted to immigrant workers for job assignments can contribute to resentment among U.S. born workers.

Critically addressing such resentment necessitated raising the class-consciousness of all the workers to understand how the day labor industry manipulates day laborers against one another. The process of making the video and listening to the testimonials provided by both immigrant and U.S. born workers helped build understanding and redirect any personal

resentment to the appropriate target—the day labor employer.

The video has two audiences. The first is day labor workers. This tape is regularly used as an organizing tool to involve new



In a public demonstration workers challenge day labor agency owner Harvey Cole at the offices of Elite Labor Services.

workers in the campaign for economic justice. Earlier this year, San Lucas Worker/ Leader Randy Smith conducted organizing training with day laborers in Cleveland. After screening the video he remarked that the workers were so inspired by the message of the tape that they insisted on conducting an action against a local day labor agency immediately.

Since this issue has received scant attention in the commercial media, the second intended audience was the broad public through public access cable television. In this case the goal was and is to raise public awareness and understanding by amplifying the voices of those currently held at the economic margins of mainstream society.

While exposing the abuses suffered by day labor workers, the video also shows some of the greatest financial beneficiaries of that exploitation. Viewers are surprised to learn that large, mainstream corporations including *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Chicago Sun-Times*, Sara Lee and Marshall Fields commonly use day labor workers in low-wage and sometimes dangerous work. Through cable television, critical views were presented of well-known firms which challenged the usual pro-corporate images that these firms spend millions to disseminate on television.

Greg Boozell [gbc@cantv.org] is technology director for Chicago Access Network TV as well as an independent video maker on labor and class issues.

LA Freewaves Festival Artworks Reveal Diverse Cultures and Common Struggles

“Through our scientific and technological genius, we have made of this world a neighborhood and yet we have not had the ethical commitment to make of it a brotherhood. But somehow, and in some way, we have got to do this. We must all learn to live together as brothers or we will all perish together as fools.”

— REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

ARTISTS, ACTIVISTS, WORKERS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS: ‘HOW CAN YOU RESIST?’

In November 2004, for its ninth biennial festival of video, film and new media, LA Freewaves invited media artists and curators from around the world to comment on the struggles unfolding in their communities, united around the theme “How Can You Resist?” The festival, which included 150 works by artists from 30 countries and five continents, included screenings and installations throughout the month in several downtown Los Angeles venues, along with cablecasts on L.A. City Channel 36 and Pasadena Channel 56, and video streaming on the website at www.freewaves.org.

The festival showcased media that was chosen by 13 international and regional media curators after viewing more than 1,500 works and soliciting entire programs from all five continents. The final program included provocative projections such as: *Can We Make Nectar from Poison?*, video art from India and Pakistan curated by Pooja Sood; *Dare to Exist*,

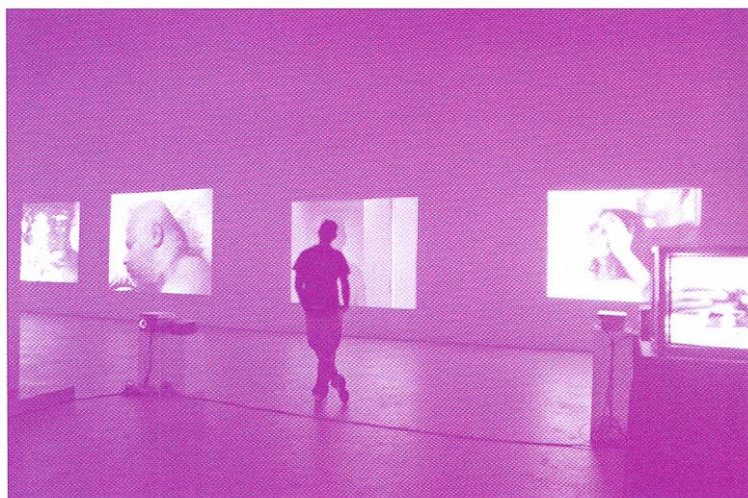
video art from Africa, curated by Miguel Petchkovsky Morais with Jeffrey Normile; and *Fast Track*, video art from China, coordinated by Pi Li and Freewaves based on the exhibition “Between Past and Future” curated by Wu Hung and Christopher Phillips.

In reviewing the works from India, Africa, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and all the Americas, LA Freewaves founder and festival director Anne Bray found commonalities as striking as the diversity. “Resistance has many incarnations in the festival, but from Mozambique to Colombia to right here in downtown Los Angeles, communi-

ties are dealing with the effects of globalization, such as global warming, labor exploitation and eviction,” Bray says. “These stories reveal what’s missing from the five o’clock news, and our mission is to provide a forum for voices that mainstream media outlets ignore.”

During the first weekend of the festival, Freewaves presented 30 video installations and projections, many arriving from Africa and India, creating a kaleidoscope of ideas and images from the world’s most adventuresome media

dancing, emcees, and activist documentaries entitled *Globalize This!* During the fourth and final Saturday night over Thanksgiving weekend, interactive new media works, artists’ karaoke, digital graffiti and video games stretched the boundaries of technology and veracity in galleries and cafés around Chinatown’s



Opening night of the LA Freewaves Festival at MOCA Geffen Contemporary.

Central Plaza and Chung King Road.

In further describing the festival, Bray said, “I see this year’s festival as a convergence of two remarkable developments, neither of which I could have anticipated a few years ago. First, the public’s interest in the issues surrounding media literacy has increased exponentially. People are skeptical about the images they see on the television news. Are these images real? Are we getting the whole story? These questions are no longer the exclusive domain of conspiracy theorists.

“Regardless of whether or not you agree with their message or their tactics, the success of *Fahrenheit 9/11* and *Outfoxed* is evidence that the public is dissatisfied with sound bites.

“At the same time, artists are turning their attention to politics. Artists are like the canary in the mineshaft, and it is precisely when free speech is imperiled that we have an obligation to speak out. For a variety of reasons, commercial media outlets have failed to address the critical issues of our time whether it’s the Patriot Act, or weapons of mass destruction, or

INTERNATIONAL CURATORS

Pi Li, video curator and art historian, Central Academy of Fine Art, Beijing, China

November Paynter, curator, Platform Garanti Contemporary Art Center, Istanbul, Turkey

Miguel Petchkovsky Morais, video curator, writer and filmmaker, based in Angola, Portugal and Holland

José Roca, chief of temporary exhibitions, Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá, Colombia

Pooja Sood, curator, Apeejay Media Gallery, New Delhi, India

artists. For the second weekend, 68 works of film and video were organized into nine thematic programs. The third weekend, which was held at Strategic Actions for a Just Economy, a nonprofit, community-development organization in the Figueroa Corridor, featured live blues music, food, break-

economic justice in a global economy. We think the public is craving a more substantive debate on these issues, and artists want to participate," she continued.

"As many of the festival's works demonstrate, it has become impossible to discuss political injustice without addressing economic issues as well," Bray says. "Even the language of resistance has been appropriated by advertisers, as in 'how can you resist this shampoo, or chocolate bar, or cleavage' and artists and activists alike need to update their tactics in order to be heard in our society."

LA Freewaves is southern California's preeminent advocate for independent, experimental, non-commercial and under-represented media. For 15 years, Freewaves has presented the *LA Freewaves Festival of Film, Video and New Media*, which brings the newest of new media arts from around the world to Los Angeles. In addition, Freewaves is producing TV programs about the media arts and building a large online archive to reach more international artists and audiences. In order to make the 2004 festival accessible to audiences outside Los Angeles, Freewaves has put a selection of works on line at www.freewaves.org in four different versions (large and small versions of Windows Media Player and Quicktime) in an attempt to accommodate a wide range of bandwidths.

Festival funders included California Community Foundation, City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, The James Irvine Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Getty Grant Program, LA County Arts Commission, Peter Norton Family Foundation and the Pasadena Art Alliance.

"It's time to globalize more than just sneakers and satellite dishes," Bray says. "Let's globalize things people really need, like living wages and free speech."

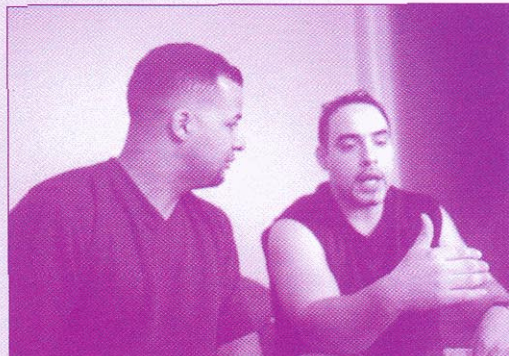
Getting Out: 600,000 in the Next 12 Months

A NEW FILM FROM GEORGE STONEY AND DAVID BAGNALL

A rough cut of *Getting Out* was screened by makers David Bagnall and George Stoney on the opening night of the Alliance's annual International Conference and Trade Show in Tampa last July to draw attention to this startling fact: Some 2.25 million U.S. citizens are kept behind bars. Some 600,000 are due to be released in the next 12 months, most of them with no preparation for what awaits them "outside."

"It isn't surprising," said Stoney, "that more than half will be behind bars again within another year, back to the only security they know."

Getting Out is a spin-off from a feature-length documentary Bagnall and Stoney have been recording since 1997, when they were present for the first performance by a prisoner-run writing and theater program called Rehabilitation Through the Arts (RTA) at Sing Sing, New York State's maximum security facility. RTA was formed with the help of Katherine Vockins, wife of Sing Sing's chaplain, to help fill the void created when the state government cut off all financial help for cultural and higher education programs to satisfy the perceived public demand that it be "hard on crime."



Robert Sanchez [left] and Carlos Santiago from *Getting Out*.

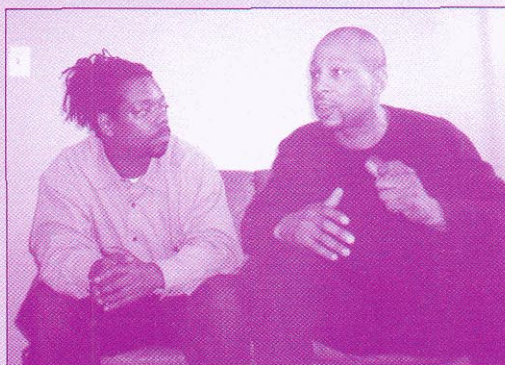
in taking advantage of every opportunity they found to get an education before the programs were ended. Both credit their experience as members of RTA for giving them the skills and self-confidence that have helped them be successful.

"And because they have done well," Stoney told the audience, "we figure they are better able to explain to middle class viewers how hard it is to start over with a felony conviction on your records. If we presented a couple of losers it might simply confirm most people's preconceptions."

When the film is finished, its makers will make it freely available for cablecasting on public access systems. "But just having people see our film is not our prime objective. We hope our film will inspire access producers to seek out people and organizations in their own communities who are concerned with the fate of former inmates and their families. Ultimately little can help these people unless it is done locally...one man or woman, one family at a time."

Producers interested in this topic should correspond with the filmmakers via gcs1@nyu.edu. Stoney can suggest films to use in gaining the cooperation from people involved. He can also recommend material should you be considering a series of programs on this topic and want to show what is hap-

pening around the country. If you have tapes yourself, or know of ones that belong on his list of recommendations, he is eager to receive your contributions. Tapes (VHS preferred) should be addressed to him at: TSOA, NYU, 721 Broadway #944, New York,



Anthony Perkins [left] and Keith Grant from *Getting Out*.

The featured players in *Getting Out* are Robert Sanchez and Carlos Santiago, both gifted poets and actors, who were paroled in 2001 after each served 15 years. Carlos was imprisoned at 14, Robert at 19. Both were particularly energetic and disciplined

Multilingual Journalism at Lehman College

BY JIM CARNEY

In 1994, over 6000 members of four minority journalist associations met in Atlanta Georgia at the "UNITY '94 Convention" to discuss the role of minority professionals in the United States. It was clear at the convention that print and broadcast news media help perpetuate the notion that cultural, racial and linguistic diversity is a liability, not an asset. In the past the issues focused on black and white; today they encompass the racial, ethnic and cultural dynamics of Asian Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, African Americans, and those of diverse European ancestry. The purpose of UNITY '94 was to present a blueprint that included preparing minority high school and college students to be journalists and supporting instructional programs that reflect and respond to multi-cultural communities. While over a decade has passed, there are few innovative approaches to answer these challenges. A recent study by the American Society of Newspaper Editors found that in 2003, minority representation in American newsrooms was only 12.5 percent while the general minority population is over 31 percent. It was this need for diversity in American newsrooms that gave birth to the Multilingual Journalism Program (MLJ) at City University of New York's Lehman College in the Bronx.

The Bronx is well known for its ethnic diversity and particularly its wide variety of Spanish-speaking immigrant populations. However, the MLJ program was designed to go well beyond English and Spanish journalism. The curriculum for the degree—the only one of its kind in the nation—combines a mixture of traditional journalism courses with advanced training in journalistic writing, in a variety of foreign languages, and a holistic approach to different and new forms of media. The program also goes beyond linguistics in that a strong focus on multicultural sensitivities is built into the curriculum. For example, one course is dedicated to researching and studying issues ranging from "Cultural Defense" in criminal cases of domestic abuse, to acceptable eye contact for television interviews in Asian cultures.



Lehman College Multilingual Journalism Professor Jim Carney (far left) with Project Engineer Yves Dossous (Front row, center) and student members of the Lehman NetRadio project.

While The Bronx and New York City are well known for having diverse populations, the various ethnic communities still maintain a level of insulation, resisting assimilation and external scrutiny. Students are exposed to new perspectives and guided on ways to respect the cultures they cover. By assigning students to research ethnic communities other than their own, they are forced to visit neighborhoods, and to review and report on local newspapers and radio and cable programs presented in languages such as Korean, Yiddish, French Creole and many more.

More importantly, prospective ethnic journalists are trained to work within their own communities, to bring to light news, information and analysis of issues and societal problems that are important to the general American public, with understanding and sensitivity. With the tools and skills of traditional journalism, and increased cultural sensitivity to their own culture and the cultures of their neighbors, these new journalists become the bridge that spans the gap separating ethnic communities.

Equally important to the curricular elements of the Multilingual Journalism Program are the hands-on opportunities for young journalists to "cut their teeth" in the craft. One of the first products of the

MLJ Program was *The Bronx Journal*. This monthly newspaper, published with a multilingual section with articles and features in 12 different languages, allows students to write both in English and in the languages they study. Distributed to community centers, schools, senior centers and other distribution points, the free publication not only serves the college and students, but serves the Bronx community as a whole.

Other projects arising from the MLJ Program include television programs, produced by students and distributed through BronxNet, the Community Access Center co-located in the same building as the Mass Communication and Multilingual Journalism Program. An early educational access program called *168 Horas* was a weekly Spanish language magazine program dealing with issues and personalities in the diverse Hispanic population in the Bronx. Another series, *Multilingual News*, provided a recap of the week's news from around the world presented in French, Italian, Spanish and Japanese.

Currently the award-winning magazine program *Inside Lehman* is produced by Mass Communication, MLJ and theatre students under the tutelage of veteran NBC producer, Tom O'Hanlon. The highly produced program highlights the programs and the people of the Lehman

community, and is cablecast to the entire city through the public access channels of BronxNet and the CUNY-TV educational access channel.

The newest and most innovative effort mounted by the Lehman MLJ/Mass Communication Program reflects the convergence of new and traditional media. Lehman NetRadio made its debut on election night 2004 with perspective, analysis and discussion of the presidential and local races by Lehman students. The project is designed to allow students to produce programming for cable television via BronxNet, and for "web radio" with—or without—video, with the assistance of the Bronx Information Network Consortium, which streams the audio and video programming to the worldwide web.

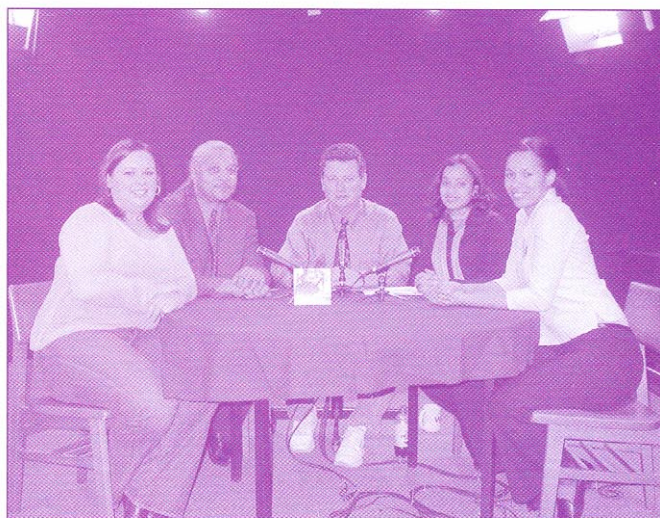
Programs in development include a Spanish-language series on fashion, a program profiling and showcasing subway and street performers, a Russian program dealing with American and international politics, and a Thai program in both Thai and English. The new production facility utilizes broadcast quality, robotic Panasonic cameras, a digital audio board and a new VT3 computer-based switching, graphic and editing system, so that high quality productions can be mounted with two or three crew members. The long-term plan is to have a lineup of programming which is a mixture of video, audio and Internet. The "webstation" will be curated by faculty, and created and produced by students and alumni. A natural outgrowth of the program is a well-trained, culturally sensitive group of students who approach the world with a

broader view, and at the same time a respect for the nuanced elements of their own ethnic community as well as that of their neighbors.

The success of the program recently prompted Lehman College and CUNY to expand the MLJ/Mass Communication program into the first new department created at the college since the 1970s. While it's gratifying to win awards and receive accolades from academic and industry leaders, perhaps the most significant testament to the success of the new Journalism, Communication and Theatre Department at Lehman is enrollment. In the last year alone the number of majors jumped from 149 to over 250.

On a practical level, the multimedia approach to journalism, where old media paradigms such as traditional television and radio are challenged, has much to offer all communicators, including community media producers. By thinking of media production and journalism as not just TV, radio or print, but as a seamless mixture of formats and technologies, the new producer is liberated from many of the traditional constrictions of old media. The advances in technology open both the production and the distribution of ideas and information in ways unthinkable a decade ago. By embracing new technologies and not limiting programming concepts to old models, journalists and community-based producers alike can increase the amount and diversity of ideas.

While the formalized structure of the Lehman approach to multilingual journalism has proved successful on an academic

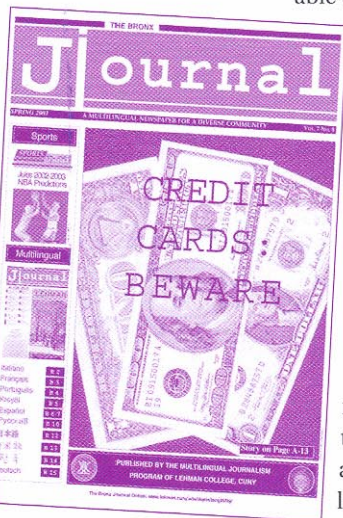
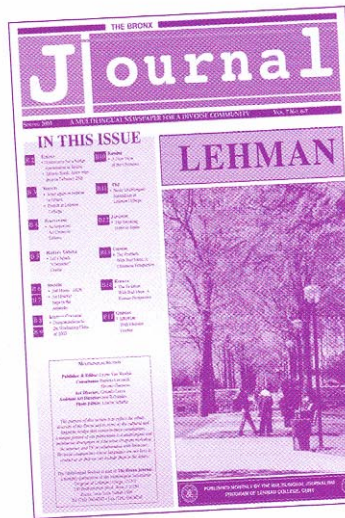


Lehman College Multilingual Journalism Students discuss local New York State elections in a live election night production, broadcast on Bronxnet Community TV and over the internet over The Bronx Information Network.

level, the lessons learned and the approaches taken by the program are applicable to all community media practitioners. Given that America is no longer just a nation with many minorities, but a nation primarily composed of a patchwork of ethnic populations, cultural sensitivity to one's own ethnic group, as well as one's neighbor's, is critical at all levels of American society. With intolerance and cultural isolationism on the rise, the importance of a diversity of voices is more critical than ever. Just as the answer to dealing with hate speech is the creation of more counterbalancing speech, the answer to intolerant and divisive racist speech is more diverse and culturally-sensitive speech.

While the elusive goals of the participants of UNITY '94 are still to be realized, progress is being made in increasing the presence and influence of minority journalists in this country. Just as the development of cable television opened channels of communications to under-represented communities through community access, new technologies married with new attitudes that are sensitive to the changing landscape of America hold the promise of a more diverse and more tolerant society.

Jim Carney [james.carney@lehman.cuny.edu] is assistant professor of Journalism, Communication and Theater at Lehman College, City University of New York, and served as executive director of Bronxnet Community Television for nine years.



The front cover of The Bronx Journal publication (left), and the front page of the multilingual pull-out section of the paper.

COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW

Congress reconvened in January with the news that they intend to rewrite the 1996 Telecommunications Act over the next two to three years. Pressure from the telecommunications industry to "level the playing field" and remove all barriers to competition means that public interest requirements of all carriers (cable, telephone, voice over internet, satellite) are at risk.

The Community Media Workers Guide to the Rewrite of the 1996 Telecommunications Act is designed as a tool for grassroots media activists who are willing and able to educate their volunteers, producers and general audiences about the pressing importance of pending changes in federal communications policy. Public advocates "inside the beltway" cannot do this alone. Nor can grassroots media activists. The only way to combat the deep and abiding influence of commercial telecommunications and media interests in Washington's law making process is to generate a "tipping point" in public awareness, generating an outcry and action that forces Congress to pay attention to the public interest. The **Guide** is designed to assist in this effort and help community media workers understand, articulate and perpetuate the "sticky message" (No More Free Ride!) that results in significant levels of public concern and can be translated into real influence and long term protection for alternative media.

THE GUIDE WILL:

- ▲ Identify sections of the 1934 Communications Act and the 1996 Telecommunications Act that require public attention and action so that the next iteration of US telecommunications law will adequately compensate our communities for the commercial use of their public-rights-of way and spectrum.
- ▲ Recruit the help of "inside the beltway" media reformers and grassroots media activists to clearly articulate the public interest position with which we must move forward in order to gain ground for free and diverse speech and public access to all telecommunications carriers.
- ▲ Compile best practices and success stories that will inspire and inform community media activists to mobilize their community members and create a national momentum on behalf of the public interest agenda.
- ▲ Highlight points in the legislative and regulatory process where public influence should be brought to bear.
- ▲ Present educational content within a graphic, media literacy context that encourages the use and distribution of the **Guide**. Cartoons, large typeface, graphs and photographs, maps, sidebars and teaching/field tips will form the substance of the printed guide. These techniques will be augmented with video and animation produced by independent media makers in the DVD and website.
- ▲ Provide a platform for the Alliance for Community Media to reach across the silos of media advocacy and build collaborations with fellow activists that will lead to significant media reform over the next several years.

Citizens' Media Projects Alter Latin America's Media Map

BY DEAN GRABER

Media in Latin America that operate outside traditional mainstream models frequently receive the label "alternative media." However, there are new ways to view the thousands of community radio and TV broadcasters, newspapers, and Internet-based projects that are produced collectively in communities from Mexico to the Southern Cone, often by citizens who have no other direct access to media channels.

By renaming such projects "citizens' media," communication professor Clemencia Rodriguez offers a new conceptual framework through which to examine them. In her book *Fissures in the Mediascape*, she defines citizens' media as groups that enact their citizenship "by actively intervening and transforming the established landscape." Their practices, she argues, empower communities to make changes and transformations. But the "alternative" label often obscures those impacts.

For those who have adopted its use, the term "citizens' media" allows us to evaluate recent community media developments in a different light.

Citizens' media projects may form mere pinpricks on the media map of Latin America. And supporters who believe that grassroots newspapers, TV, and radio stations might become viable substitutes for mass media vehicles may be overestimating their reach. But by Rodriguez's definition, these small local media serve as more than mere "alternatives." In thousands of urban and rural communities, citizens' media play pivotal roles by enabling citizens to enact their rights of expression, and to strengthen their conception of citizenship.

As they confront legal, physical, and financial challenges, citizens' media have gained broad respect and occasional prominence for their ability to represent the perspectives of underrepresented communities. Community radio and video, for example, are widely credited for preserving and promoting indigenous languages and cultures of the Mapuche in Chile, Aymara in Bolivia, Quechua in Peru, and Maya in Mexico and Guatemala.

But community media have also acquired enemies in the public and private sectors who wage frequent attempts to thwart their success.

Two recent events in South America illustrate how progress in the community media field can involve a few steps forward in one country, and one step back in another—often simultaneously.

On November 10, 2004, community broadcasters in Argentina gained ground in their efforts to modify a law enacted during the "Dirty War" in the late 1970s. The law had banned community-based and cooperative entities from owning radio and TV stations, and had limited that right to commercial owners. By a nearly unanimous vote, the Chamber of Deputies approved a bill to modify that article of the law. Although the proposed reform still faces a final Senate vote, neighborhood associations, women's and youth organizations, labor unions, and other social movements inched closer to gaining legal status to broadcast—joining more than 2,000 citizens' radio stations reported to exist already in Argentina, despite their illegality.

In contrast, community media stations in neighboring countries were under assault. On October 29, police in Paraguay burst into the community radio station Salado FM, in the city of Limpio, 15 miles (25 km) from the capital, and squelched its transmissions, the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) reported.

According to AMARC, Paraguayan regulators had ordered the shutdown, claiming the station's broadcasts interfered with air traffic control signals. Similarly, in Uruguay, AMARC reported that a community radio broadcaster in Montevideo was attacked in November by a neighborhood gang and hospitalized with internal injuries—an act that station leaders believe was intended to scare them out of the neighborhood.

TRANSFORMATION AND EMPOWERMENT.

Recent events in Latin America support Rodriguez's assertion that citizens' media projects enable participants to transform existing media structures and empower their communities. But, in the process, many face severe intolerance and intimidation.

Citizens' media producers from around the world converged in Brazil's southern city of Porto Alegre in July 2004 for the fourth gathering of OURMedia/NUESTROS Medios, a network of community media practitioners, scholars, and activists. Workshops at OURMedia highlighted citizens' media practices from five continents. The four-day event also illuminated Brazil's experiences and featured a visit to Radio Restinga, a station on Porto Alegre's periphery that had broadcast several reports denouncing inadequate medical care in the neighborhood, Brazil's Independent Media Center reported. Radio Restinga had also been fined for broadcasting without a license. Less than two weeks after the tour by OURMedia delegates, a dozen police officers and federal agents closed the station and seized its equipment.

Despite the widespread closure of community radio stations in Brazil (described further on), other citizens' media, such as neighborhood newspapers, have thrived there. A newspaper written by homeless residents of Porto Alegre has circulated every quarter since 2000. In Rio de Janeiro, residents in a few of the city's 700 shantytown *favelas* study journalism and photography. An Internet-based *favela* "news agency" was launched in Rio to provide a realistic portrait of the communities. And in northeastern Brazil, the non-governmental organization Comunicação e Cultura ("Communication and Culture") has operated an innovative chain of citizens' newspapers for more than 13 years, training local citizens and students in public schools to become reporters, and to "enact citizenship" through community journalism. In 2003, the NGO assisted newspaper projects in more than 100 northeastern

communities and, in 2004, expanded its publishing project into the southeastern state of São Paulo.

Community media has also grown elsewhere in Latin America. In Colombia, where new community radio licenses have not been issued for seven years, the citizens' radio sector could expand by more than 400 stations as early as 2005, adding to the nearly 500 that already exist. Last November, the Communications Ministry issued a draft of its guidelines for approving new community stations. Similarly, Venezuela's government authorized permits last September for 22 more community radio stations and one TV channel, pushing to 150 the total of authorized community broadcasters. The government's National Telecommunications Commission (CONATEL) is trying to promote community media as an alternative to the private channels that have opposed the government of President Hugo Chávez, the newspaper *El Universal* reported.

And in Central America, where underground radio stations crackled throughout the lengthy guerrilla wars, citizens' radio now gives voice to farm workers, teenagers, and indigenous women and men whose communities were excluded from the mass media for generations. Non-governmental and religious organizations train community broadcasters to produce their own news and entertainment programming and to address varied issues of local relevance, such as nutrition, domestic violence, and rural forestry.

CHALLENGES. Community media encounter many challenges from regulators, politicians, and commercial interests who may view community media as threats.

In Brazil, for example, citizens' radio is under siege (see story page 33). By some estimates, more than 4,000 community broadcasters have applied for licenses, but the federal regulating agency, ANATEL, has not responded. Meanwhile, federal and state authorities have shut down unlicensed community stations at the rate of up to 12 per day. More than 4,400 stations were silenced in 2003—on top of 3,200 others closed in 2002, according to news reports. And in late 2004, radio antennas continued to fall like dominos. In a single day in October, federal agents dismantled 12 unlicensed stations in the city of Belo Horizonte—home to one of Latin America's most renowned community stations, Radio Favela. That station, which won two United

Nations awards for its anti-drug campaigns, has remained on the air since 1981, despite government shutdowns, flood damage, and discrimination.

Government investigators acknowledge that police who enforce the closure orders have often acted violently against station personnel. And some media activists describe Brazil's community broadcasting laws as among the most oppressive in the Americas.

In Mexico, where President Vicente Fox's campaign platform called for greater guarantees for freedom of expression and the press, community radio stations persist in their battle for legalization. Commercial broadcasters argue that community stations are "pirates" that interfere with licensed stations. Dozens of community broadcasters have sought, but not received, permits from the Secretariat for Communications and Transportation. They insist that the government's systematic refusal to issue licenses forces them to operate illegally, subjecting them to raids by regulators.

Citizens' media face financial and physical threats as well. In Colombia, a government study warned that several community TV stations could fold if they don't improve their management, the newspaper *El Tiempo* reported in December 2003. And in 2004, press freedom groups pushed Colombian officials to solve the year-old murder of community radio broadcaster Juan Emeterio Rivas, who had produced a controversial opinion program on a community radio station. A suspect, the mayor of Rivas' city in northern Colombia, was arrested and then released for lack of evidence.

Against this backdrop, citizens groups in Latin America will continue in 2005 to exercise their rights to operate their own media, despite numerous institutional and cultural obstacles. No one expects the community operations to replace conglomerates. But for committed citizens—such as those in the 400 Colombian towns that could soon get radio licenses—the achievement of a place on the media map holds more meaning, and more promise, than the label "alternative."

Dean Graber [deangraber@mail.utexas.edu], a former wire service and newspaper reporter in the U.S. and Brazil, has also worked with citizens' media projects for 12 years. He is based at the University of Texas at Austin, where he manages a training program for Latin American journalists.

Colombian Indigenous Peoples Decide What to Do with Modern Media

BY JEANINE EL GAZ¹ AND
CLEMENCIA RODRIGUEZ²

By 2002, 14 indigenous radio stations had begun operating in Colombia reaching 78.6 percent of the national indigenous population.³ In the following paragraphs we would like to share with U.S. media activists and academics a fraction of the fascinating and complex story behind these radio stations.

It all starts with what is perhaps the most important transformation in the Colombian legal framework: the Constitution of 1991. Breaking in two Colombia's contemporary history, the Constitution of '91 embodies a major accomplishment on the part of Colombian progressive social movements. Under pressure from social justice organizations, the Colombian political elite finally gave way, allowing for constitutional reform in 1991. Years of grassroots organizing and mobilizing since the 1960s and 1970s led to Colombia's new social contract as embodied in the constitution.

Although a thorough analysis of the Constitution of '91 is beyond the scope of this article, we want to emphasize the features that affect Colombian indigenous media. First, the Colombian indigenous movement was one of the strongest protagonists in the effort toward constitutional reform. The 1970s, for instance, had seen a widespread—courageous and ingenious—process of land recuperation by indigenous communities in southern Colombia, which had suffered centuries of expropriation by powerful local landowners. As a result, issues of importance to ethnic minorities were always central in both the constitutional discussions prior to 1991 and the final text. Second, the Constitution of '91 left behind the idea of "nation" as a monolithic entity founded in one language, one religion, one identity, and one culture, and espoused an idea of "nation" as a dialogue among diverse ethnic and cultural identities. As a result, the Constitution of '91 repeatedly recognizes the right to difference, and the notion that Colombia is a nation constituted by many different



identities, interests, and dreams for a future.

On the basis of three arguments, the Constitution of '91 recognized that Colombian indigenous peoples deserved differential treatment from the Colombian state: their different identity, their different needs, and the historical debt of the Colombian state toward indigenous communities. These served as a framework for a series of legal mechanisms favoring Colombian indigenous peoples. As part of this differential treatment sanctioned by the new constitution, the Colombian state provided indigenous communities with radio stations.

Another important component of this story is the Colombian Ministry of Culture. Part of this Ministry, the *Unidad de Radio* (Office for Radio), has played a central role in supporting a nascent movement of citizens' media in the country. Since 1995, the Unidad de Radio has launched a series of initiatives to strengthen Colombian citizens' media. In a rare case of a government supporting citizens' media, the Unidad de Radio has provided guidance and training in technical and legal aspects, as well as established a favorable environment in which different communities can discuss citizens' media issues such as regulation, sustainability, programming, and audiences. This resulted in a discussion about indigenous radio among leaders of Colombian indigenous peoples. Once the Colombian government confirmed that

each indigenous community would have its own radio station, the questions emerged. What is indigenous radio? Why do indigenous peoples need modern media? What is indigenous radio for? The Unidad de Radio was committed to facilitating this discussion and to acting on the decisions of the indigenous leaders.

In May of 2000 the Unidad de Radio convened the first International Meeting of Indigenous Radio of America. With international guests such as a Shuar speaker from Ecuador, a Mapuche speaker from Chile, and Susan Braine from a Hopi radio station in the United States, this event laid the groundwork for unprecedented dialogue among American indigenous leaders around their experiences with citizens' media. The meeting also included 28 Colombian indigenous leaders who spent two days discussing the ins and outs of welcoming these media technologies in their communities.

Colombian indigenous peoples do not have a unified attitude toward media technologies. Their approaches to media are as diverse as their own identities. Indigenous leaders from the Colombian Amazon communities, for example, defined their communication and information needs in terms of distance and the lack of efficient transportation. In the words of one Amazon indigenous leader: "For us, moving five kilometers costs 6,000 pesos. Distant communities have to buy a tank of gas and rent a motorboat, and the tank lasts no more than ten minutes. Land transportation is impossible in our territory, you have to travel by water or air, so some type of communication is extremely necessary."⁴ After much internal consultation and discussion, Colombian Amazon indigenous communities decided that, more than radio stations, what they most needed was rural telephony. The Colombian government responded with a regional Program for Rural Telephony and Telecenters.

The Kogui community, living deep in the Sierra Nevada, a mountain range in northern Colombia, had a different perspective. According to Kogui leader

Arregocés, to introduce a radio station in the middle of a Kogui community would be like stabbing the motherland with a weapon directly connected to the processes of globalization and westernization. The Kogui perceived a radio station as an undesirable conduit toward questionable West-led processes of globalization. A radio antenna for the Kogui is a knife-like weapon that binds their territory and culture to global capitalism. The Kogui decided to decline having their own indigenous radio. Partly due to the isolation of their geographic location in the remote Sierra Nevada, the Kogui have managed to stay fairly secluded. This geographic situation framed their discussion and determined their decision to not welcome media technologies.

Northern Colombia is also the home to the Arhuacos indigenous community. As a result of their discussion about the role of media technologies, the Arhuacos decided that radio would be used not as a communications medium for their community, but as a tool for the Arhuacos to communicate with the rest of the world. The Arhuacos saw community radio as a means to talk to non-Indians. The Arhuacos consider that they have much to teach and to communicate to non-Arhuacos, in particular to the newly arrived mestizo *colonos* coming to the Sierra Nevada in a search for new agricultural lands. For the Arhuacos it is clear that the introduction of radio into their lives has to follow a traditional process of consultation with the *mamos* (Arhuaco traditional religious leaders). These consultations evolve at their own Arhuaco pace, not at Western speed, and for this reason, without any hesitation or rush, and despite the offer of the Colombian government to equip them with a radio station, the Arhuacos have not implemented community radio in their territories.

On the other side of the spectrum are the Awas and the Guambiano indigenous peoples, who have their own radio stations up and running. When the Colombian government asked indigenous peoples to design their own local development programs, indigenous peoples responded by saying that they had no intention of "developing," which implies changing into something you are not. Colombian indigenous peoples then proposed their own Life Plans

Grupo Alavío: the Video Camera as Another Weapon

BY MARIE TRIGONA

Making technologies and skills accessible and available to exploited people by democratizing audiovisual production and language is a priority for Grupo Alavío. For more than 10 years, Alavío has been participating in working class struggles in Argentina and supporting them with audiovisual materials. "We are working to construct an identity and thinking that reflects the specific interests and needs of the working class and other exploited sectors. The camera is a tool, another weapon," says Grupo Alavío's manifesto.

The participants in Grupo Alavío are not media activists. We don't think that life passes through a camera lens or a video screen. We see the camera as another political tool, and we are conscious that at any moment it may be necessary to put down the camera and adopt other roles alongside those struggling. Activism cannot be pushed into the singular role of filming with a camera or transmitting a TV signal, it is part of a demand for the right to organize, skills training and education for activists, the right to self-defense against violence on the part of the state, and the right to create our own media.

We have used video to counter misinformation in the mass media, as proof against government repression, as an intervention in organizations' internal debates, to prepare activists for action and evaluate their efforts, and as tools for popular education. Only afterwards were the videos presented as documentary films.

Fundamental to Alavío's work is the group's integration into struggling organizations. This allows the group to establish collective spaces for audiovisual narration and to actively participate with activists in social movements, assuming that activism goes far beyond producing audiovisual material.

One of Alavío's most recent actions was participation in a weeklong camp in front of the National Congress in Buenos Aires. In a state of alert as the courts launched an eviction order, the workers

of the occupied ceramics factory, Zanon, organized presentations, art exhibits, video screenings, music concerts, and other activities. Grupo Alavío worked with other video groups to produce short daily news pieces about the camp (The videos were later shown during an assembly at Zanon to evaluate the camp.) and organized video screenings to connect the different social movements struggling to defend Zanon. At one screening, workers from the Chilavert printing factory presented the documentary *Chilavert recupera* (Chilavert recuperated) by Grupo Alavío. A few days later Grupo Alavío screened a short documentary about Bauen Hotel, a hotel occupied and managed by workers since 2002, with three women from the Bauen in attendance. Both of the documentaries were intended to help the movements realize their bonds and unite.

Grupo Alavío has also produced short news segments for television broadcast. The most recent piece is the documentary, *Mujer* (Woman), which was part of a campaign for the release of two political prisoners, Marcela and Carmen, members of the Association of Women Prostitutes, who have been in jail for over four months after participating in a demonstration. The news segment tells of their lives in prostitution and how the government profits from prostitution. The video was recently shown to more than 100 people as part of the day against violence against women at the Zanon camp.

As a video collective we become available to the demands of organizations and often our videos take on a life of their own. In addition to our internal and external video workshops, Grupo Alavío is building video libraries in the subway lines (with transportation workers who are organizing a wildcat union), on squatter's land on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, and in factories run by workers.

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(*Planes de Vida*), laying out a blueprint for the present and the future. Life Plans are fundamental to the future of indigenous peoples because they embody the collective discussions and decisions of their communities. The Awas and the Guambianos have a clear idea of what to do with modern media: these media should be introduced only to realize their Life Plans. The Life Plan defines the parameters for thinking about the role(s) of citizens' media in each community. The Awas, for example, used their Life Plan to address the communication needs of two very different communities, resulting in two radio stations which were set up to respond to two very different populations. One was an AM station entirely in indigenous language for the more rural and less acculturated Awas in the territory; the other was an FM station in Spanish for the more mestizo Awas living in the urban center.

In Colombia it is well known that the strongest participants of decades-old indigenous struggles are the Guambianos and Paezes in the south of the country. It is not surprising then that the Guambianos and Paezes have welcomed modern media into their political project as an important tool that can help them reach different goals. First, these indigenous peoples see radio as a technology that fascinates young Guambianos and Paezes; thus, through radio, older Guambianos and Paezes can communicate tradition, language⁵, music, and local wisdom and memory to younger members of their communities. Second, radio can serve as a means to disseminate and fortify local indigenous languages, extending them to border territories in order to counter intruding languages and cultures. Third, given the dispersion of their indigenous communities in an enormous territory, the Guambianos and the Paezes see radio as a tool that can help overcome long distances, allowing them to transmit information, generate debate and discussions around key issues, and mobilize their communities when necessary. Currently, Paezes and Guambianos have four radio stations and most recently they implemented a project to offer training in radio production to 8,500 young members from all the indigenous communities in southern Colombia. Their goal is to cultivate local radio production collectives throughout southern indigenous Colombia; these collectives will feed

the stations with local programming from many different viewpoints.

As a major concession to the development of indigenous radio, the Colombian government was willing to assign radio licenses to the *Cabildos Gobernadores*, which are legal indigenous authorities recognized by the central government. In order to assign radio licenses to the *Cabildos*, which are local government entities, the Ministry of Communications

As a major concession to the development of indigenous radio, the Colombian government was willing to assign radio licenses to the *Cabildos Gobernadores*, which are legal indigenous authorities recognized by the central government.

designated these stations as "public interest radio," a status that is usually only assigned to public entities such as municipal governments or public universities. This status allows indigenous radio stations to broadcast to wider areas than would be allowed under the regulations for community radio.

However, we do not want to leave readers with the impression that the relationship between the Colombian government and Colombian indigenous communities around radio is entirely harmonious. The government was unwilling to concede on several other issues. First, indigenous peoples had requested that their radio licenses be assigned as "indigenous radio," not as "public interest radio," nor as "community radio." They wanted to avoid the "public interest" status because it excludes advertising; and they wanted to avoid the "community" status because it restricts regional coverage. However, the government decided to assign the licenses as "public interest radio." This status prevents indigenous peoples from funding their stations through local advertising, forcing them to depend on grant moneys and sponsorships. Also, as with community radio, Colombian legislation does not allow indigenous radio stations to operate as a network. Is there fear that numerous small indigenous radio stations will connect to form a unified indigenous voice? (And, that the voice will be spoken in languages that outsiders cannot understand.) Or, are commercial radio stations being protected from a competing medium that could reach large audiences?

We could go on and on about different aspects of the discussion emerging from

indigenous communities around information and communication technologies in Colombia. For example, indigenous leaders have discussed armed conflict and the presence of illegal armed groups (guerrilla, paramilitaries, drug traffickers) close to indigenous radio stations. Also, indigenous leaders are suspicious about the introduction of modern media in indigenous territories in an era of free trade agreements. With this short text we

wanted to show the complexity and maturity of the discussion and reflection around media technologies developed by Colombian indigenous peoples.

FOOTNOTES:

- 1 My office welcomes graduate students, researchers, or others wanting to do research or internships on any of our citizens' media projects with different Colombian communities. If interested, please contact jelgazi@mincultura.gov.co.
- 2 In general I do not find good things to say or to write about governments when it comes to supporting citizens' media. However, if I see government initiatives that I think are commendable I don't have a problem acknowledging it and in the case of the Unidad de Radio I am impressed. All the text in this article praising the Unidad de Radio is my own more than Jeanine's.
- 3 The total Colombian indigenous population is 708,000 or approximately 1.8 percent of the total population.
- 4 Unidad de Radio (2000). *Rádios y Pueblos Indígenas. Memorias del Encuentro Internacional de Rádios Indígenas de América*. Bogotá, Colombia: Ministerio de Cultura, p. 70.
- 5 There are approximately 59 indigenous languages in Colombia classified in 14 language families.

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Brazilian Community Radio Under Siege: Government Shuts Thousands of Stations

BY STEFANIA MILAN

Brazil is well known for the longing of its people to communicate, for their vitality, and ultimately for its leftist government ruled by Ignacio 'Lula' da Silva. Even though its government is considered a progressive one, the legislation regulating community broadcasting is still retrograde, radio activists say.

CASE 1. In August 2004 Radio Restinga¹, broadcasting from a community center in a low-income Porto Alegre neighborhood where 150,000 people live in precarious conditions, was shut down by the telecommunication regulatory agency Anatel². It was the second shut-down since 1999, when the station started to operate. Ironically the seizure came just after the station had been visited by about 100 practitioners and researchers from the global OurMedia network, who praised Radio Restinga³ as an example of a successful community channel combining participation and social promotion.

CASE 2. In October 2004 the community radio station União FM⁴, operating in Guarulhos (São Paulo), was shut down and five operators were arrested and accused of "clandestine communication," "conspiracy" and "endangerment of aircraft." (The São Paulo International Airport is nearby.) Paradoxically, Anatel officers were not looking for União FM, but for another station. They shut down União anyway, seizing the equipment.

CASE 3. The Association of Community Radio and Television Stations of the Sisaleiro area, near Salvador de Bahia, includes 16 radio stations. Only two have governmental authorization to operate. One of them, Radio Valente FM⁵, was recently legalized after months of repression. One night police officers arrived at the station asking to enter, but without identifying themselves as policemen. The radio operator, afraid of thieves, would not open the door. The police destroyed a wall and the door, and started to beat the operator. It was a shock for the whole community.

Unfortunately these are not isolated cases. "Violence and unconstitutional



Radiolivre.org went to Restinga, set up their equipment in the little square during the Saturday market, and invited people to take the microphone.

"Violence and unconstitutional practices against community radio are usual in Brazil," said activist Thiago from Radio Muda, a university station broadcasting from Campinas in the São Paulo region that has been closed twice by police.

practices against community radio are usual in Brazil," said activist Thiago from Radio Muda, a university station broadcasting from Campinas in the São Paulo region that has been closed twice by police.

It is estimated that there are between 5,000 and 10,000 community radio stations in Brazil, but the regulatory body Anatel recognizes only 2,620 active radio channels, including community radio; another 1,270 are waiting for approval. The rest, considered illegal, are persecuted. The operators are jailed and often they are accused of "conspiracy."

The Community Radio Law⁶ created in 1998 under the presidency of Fernando

Henrique Cardoso, currently regulates community broadcasting. It fixes the maximum strength of community radio transmitters at 25 watts, limiting stations to a reach of one km. The law also prevents community radio stations from carrying advertising or belonging to a network. If a community broadcaster interferes in the operation of a commercial station, it can be shut down, but the law cannot be applied in reverse. In March 2004 a federal resolution allocated only one frequency—from 87.4 to 87.8 FM—for community broadcasting in the entire country, which has the world's fifth largest area and a population of about 170 million people.

Anatel has enforced the law by closing "clandestine" channels, by asking federal police to seize broadcasting equipment, and by arresting station operators. About 12,900 community radio stations have been shut down and equipment worth \$3 million from 117,755 operations has been confiscated since 1998, according to police figures. In the same period prosecutors have launched 10,142 trials against "illegal" radio stations, and courts have convicted 3,600 people under the restric-

tive community broadcasting legislation. In the first three months of 2004, 696 stations were denounced as not authorised to broadcast, 1,482 were denounced for interference, and 862 were shut down.

Paradoxically, the Brazilian Federal Constitution, signed in 1988, considers communication a fundamental human right. Article 5 says, "the expression of intellectual, artistic, scientific and communication activity is free and independent from censorship or license." The Brazilian case is unusual in Latin America; other countries, except Chile, have more permissive legislation where restrictions only address the maximum strength of the radio transmitters.

"The Brazilian government has no political will to create good conditions for community media. Since long ago, the



"We are asking the government to 'repair' the situation created by this repressive legislation and to stop all the court cases against community radio operators. We want to dialogue with the government to change the legislation," said Sofia Hammoe from AMARC Brasil.

ing people how easy and inexpensive a radio station can be. "We have to change the way citizens conceive their relationship with media. We should be active participants in communications and stop being passive listeners," said Juliana Vergueiro from radiolivre.org.

In November 2004 the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)⁸ organized a seminar in Brasilia on community radio legislation, denouncing the undemocratic

policies of the federal government and the violent repression of community radio by the Brazilian police.

There is no efficient structure for dealing with the high number of requests for a licence, AMARC said. The association is pressuring the government to have the right to communicate recognized as a human right. "We are asking the government to 'repair'

tions were seen as a threat, because they were difficult to control by the central power. And this idea has persisted," Cláudio Prado, coordinator of the Digital Policies of the Ministry of Culture and member of the working group, said in an interview to the news agency Agência Brasil. "The violent behavior of the police is a cultural heritage of the dictatorship," Prado added.

Despite this good news, the struggle for legalization of Brazilian community radio looks to be long and difficult. But we all can contribute. "An international mobilization could help by lobbying the politicians, supporting the stations, and sharing skills to empower the Brazilian movement," Sofia Hammoe said.

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FOOTNOTES

¹ <http://restingafm.rg3.net> (in Portuguese)

² www.anatel.gov.br/home/default.asp (in Portuguese)

³ OurMedia is a global network of activists and researchers concerned with alternative and citizens' media. See www.ourmedianet.org. For a report from the annual meeting, held in Porto Alegre (Brazil) in July 2004, see the article from Janice K. Windborne in the International Association for Media and Communication Research newsletter:

www.iamcr.net/pdf/okt2004.pdf

⁴ www.portaldeguarulhos.com.br/uniao_fm.htm (in Portuguese)

⁵ www.ppp.ch/cms/article.php3?id_article=528 (in French)

⁶ www.anatel.gov.br/index.asp?link=/biblioteca/regulamentos/regula_mc/regula_serv_radio_comun.htm (in Portuguese)

⁷ www.radiolivre.org (in Portuguese)

⁸ www.amarc.org/



Radiolivre.org at Restinga.

government has not given permission to operate community channels," Restinga's coordinator Marisa Godinho said. But this aggressive repression did not prevent people from operating their community channels. "Laws are not a problem because they have to adapt themselves to our practices. The right of expression is a fundamental human right," said Chico Caminati from Radio Muda.

Radio Muda is part of radiolivre.org⁷, the network of Brazilian free radio stations created after the third World Social Forum was held in Porto Alegre in January 2003. (The radiolivre website provides worldwide web streaming for local stations, allowing them to reach the rest of the world.) Often activists take the streets to 'give people voice' and encourage people to operate their own channels, show-

the situation created by this repressive legislation and to stop all the court cases against community radio operators. We want to dialogue with the government to change the legislation," said Sofia Hammoe from AMARC Brasil.

Things seem to be slowly changing. The local authorities of Campinas, Itabuna and Bahia have approved a more permissive local legislation, which was permitted by the federal constitution, enabling community radio stations to operate in their territories. Moreover, responding to a claim from communities that suffered violent repression, in October 2004 the federal government created an inter-ministerial working group to deal with the situation of community stations in Brazil. "For several years during the dictatorship community radio sta-

U.S. Community Media Center Lends a Helping Hand to Ghana's Ga District

BY ROBERT J. HEYS

When Grand Rapids, Michigan and the Ga District of Ghana became Sister Cities in 1994, there were cultural differences, to be sure, however their populations were both approximately 175,000. A mere decade later, the population of Grand Rapids had increased to 225,000 while the population of the Ga District had soared to 600,000. As is often the case in developing countries, population increases are the result of migration from rural areas to urban ones. The population growth has been so dramatic that the demand and need for services has become especially challenging for a nation that is struggling to be a democracy. Community radio is one of those services that an economically challenged Ghana is trying to develop.

Located adjacent to Accra, the capital city of Ghana, the Ga District is situated on the Atlantic coastline within miles of picturesque ocean frontage. Its close proximity to such beauty is overshadowed by the grit of a city whose infrastructure is not keeping pace with its population growth. Every task becomes complicated by outdated telecommunications systems or overburdened roads in need of repair.

Sister Cities is an international organization of cultural, civic and economic exchange. Grand Rapids has several sister city relationships, each different in mission and membership. When members from our Ga District Sister City visited Grand Rapids in 2003, they found a tour of the Grand Rapids Community Media Center to be a highlight and immediately saw potential benefits to having the same services available in their city.

Although English is the official language of Ghana, only 50 percent of the people speak it. Ga leaders thought that being able to provide radio programming in the Ga language would reach far more people, particularly recent arrivals from rural areas. In addition, information could be disseminated to those who were not literate.

My involvement began in January 2004. A request was sent to all the volunteers at our community radio station,



WYCE 88.1 FM, asking for assistance with the Ghana community radio project. After three years of working programming, the opportunity to be a part of other aspects of community radio was intriguing. The challenge of working on a project so far away—geographically, socially and philosophically, only increased the appeal.

A trip was planned to Ghana, led by our mayor, to mark the 10-year anniversary of our Sister City relationship. It was a convenient opportunity for me to become acquainted with the Ga District and the people on that side of the ocean who were involved.

There are obvious barriers to working on a project in an unfamiliar place thousands of miles away. Communication is complicated by the lack of a sophisticated telecommunications system. In Ghana, access to the internet is limited to internet cafes. Well-marked signs and advertising for "Telecommunication Centers" lead to an individual under a kiosk with a lone cell phone!

Even faxing our itinerary and arranging hotel stays was complicated, requiring that our fax, sent to one location, be hand couried to another, then either officially received or left to sit unrecognized for hours—or days! This is how communication happens in Ghana, and other parts of Africa, Asia, and even Europe.

Once inside Ghana, though, it was a relief to find boundless enthusiasm for the community media center project and a commitment from the people of the Ga

District. My fear had been that we were working towards something that was of great interest to us, but of only a passing interest to them. In various informal and formal meetings it was expressed to me, time and again, that there was a need for community radio, far surpassing what I had expected. In addition to their interest in community radio, Ga District leaders wanted to build a community multimedia center with a computer lab and eventually a community television station. The increase in the scope of the project, while intriguing, added to the complexity and challenge. Additional equipment, space and training would be needed.

Our local community radio station in Grand Rapids is devoted almost exclusively to entertainment in the form of music. Their station would be more diverse. In addition to providing entertainment, they needed to focus on cultural issues, education and health information.

Programming on other radio stations in the Ga District is mostly composed of foreign content. Although people enjoy hearing from and about the rest of the world, they also want to be connected with their community and country.

Community radio will offer a rare opportunity to develop and support the local culture. Although entertainment may seem frivolous, in a country with so few diversions from daily life, community radio entertainment is a valuable—and affordable—commodity.

Health information will be particularly important. With an average life expectancy of only 52, it is rare to see an elderly person on the street in Ghana. The cost of health care is prohibitively high for the vast majority of the population, so treatable diseases often become terminal illnesses. For many people, health information is their health care.

One of the challenges of dealing with an undeveloped country is the temptation to make assumptions. Nothing can be taken for granted in Ghana. Even budgeting is askew from our perspective. For example, the cost structure in Ghana is very different from that in the United States. Monthly Internet service in Ghana

is \$300 USD versus service here that is ten times faster for \$30! Conversely, constructing a small building to house the station will cost approximately USD \$5,000. Initial budgeting has indicated that a 1000-watt station, enough to cover the geographical area of the Ga District, can be built for less than \$125,000 USD. In the United States, expenditures would be, at minimum, three times that.

As in every humanitarian effort in our current economic environment, initial funding and sustainability for this project will be difficult. The United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is an ardent supporter of this type of endeavor and we anticipate our initial funding to come from them. (UNESCO has launched a community multimedia centers initiative and has released a handbook, *How to Start and Keep Going: A Guide to Community Multimedia Centres*.)

In addition, local Ga District business people have expressed the desire to contribute to the sustainability of the station and nominal fees charged for internet service at the media center would offset costs of maintaining the station. An ongoing program of grant writing to interna-

tional foundations that support the concept of community media will be undertaken as well.

As of this writing, a nongovernmental organization is in the process of being formed in Ghana. This NGO will be called Ga District Sisters Cities International and will be the owner of the community multimedia center. Once the NGO has been formed, an application for a frequency license can be filed and the search for funding can begin. Given the inherent coordination difficulties that are associated with international projects, it may be optimistic to believe that we can begin broadcasting by the end of 2005.

But, the project will not lose momentum. We were convinced of that, when, in October, the equivalent of our mayor, the Honorable Samuel Attoh, District Chief Executive of the Ga District, made a brief Sister City visit to Grand Rapids. Mr. Attoh is a chief proponent of locating a community media center in his district. During his visit, he spent a morning touring the Grand Rapids Community Media Center.

Mr. Attoh is currently campaigning for a seat in the Ghana Parliament where he would represent the Ga District on a national level. He continues to express his

enthusiasm for this project and asks to be kept fully informed of the progress, while opening doors to potential grassroots contributors and leadership.

Throughout the world, there are many reasons to advocate for community media. Community multimedia centers allow us to exercise our Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [www.un.org/Overview/rights.html] to freedom of opinion and expression. They offer us the escape of listening to a beautiful piece of music. And, they allow us to receive information that would not be viable to produce and disseminate commercially.

The common thread is that community multimedia centers build community through media and enhance the potential for true democracy. Fundamentally, a community media center gives everyone the ability to touch the rest of the world, whether a continent or a tribe away. For that reason community multimedia centers are vitally important.

Robert J. Heys [rjheys1@yahoo.com] is a Grand Rapids Community Media Center volunteer and treasurer of Grand Rapids Sister Cities International. An accountant by trade, he has traveled widely in China, Russia and Eastern Europe.

Alliance for Communications Democracy



For more than 15 years, the Alliance for Communications Democracy has been fighting to preserve and strengthen access. Though the odds against us have been high, and the mega-media, corporate foes well-heeled and powerful, time and again we've won in the courts. We can't continue this critical work without your support. With the ramifications of the 1996 Telecommunications Act still manifesting themselves, and new legislation on the horizon, we must be vigilant if we are to prevail and preserve democratic communications. If not us, who? If not now, when? Please join the Alliance for Communications Democracy today!

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Direct membership inquiries to ACD Treasurer Sam Behrend, Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85701, telephone 520.624.9833, or email at sam@accesstucson.org

www.theacd.org

Making a Home in Australia: Ethnic Access, Training and Funding

BY SABA EL-GHUL

The beginning of ethnic broadcasting in Australia goes back to 1973, when ethnic communities began to work together with sections of the wider Australian community, throwing their considerable strength and influence into campaigns for access to the nation's airwaves. As a result of their activism, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), a national broadcaster, was encouraged by the Whitlam Labour government to open the first ethnic 'access' station in Melbourne in 1975. Today, many community stations provide ethnic access programming. According to Australia's Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF), there are 75 stations (35 metropolitan and 40 regional) providing more than 1,200 hours per week of local programming in 86 languages.

The Australian government provides funding to ethnic community broadcasters through the Community Broadcasting Foundation. To comply with CBF's funding guidelines, ethnic programming must be mainly in a language other than English, contain no more than 50 percent music content, have a spoken word content of no more than 25 percent religious material or references, be produced locally under the auspices of a recognized local ethnic community language group and broadcast between 6:00 a.m. and midnight.

Currently, a major issue affecting community broadcasting in Australia is the drop in government financial support (through the CBF) for community radio. Practitioners are concerned about whether funding will continue for training courses that prepare migrant communities to establish their own ethnic programs. This is a crucial issue, as it is the new and small communities that are most in need of a broadcast program to keep them in touch with their homeland, Australian society and each other.

The Australian Ethnic Radio Training Program (AERTP) is in the last stages of government funding and must now seek alternative sources to continue the delivery of training. The AERTP is funded by the federal government in three grant

According to Australia's Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF), there are 75 stations (35 metropolitan and 40 regional) providing more than 1,200 hours per week of local programming in 86 languages.

rounds per year, enabling community stations to run three training courses annually with a minimum of 12 students per course. There are two levels for every round: (1) Certificate II, a beginners' course, includes various broadcasting skills such as studio use and recording, radio interviewing, and broadcast law and editing; and (2) Certificate III, an advanced course, teaches program research skills, news and current affairs, bilingual broadcasting, and other techniques. The training is supervised through the National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters' Council (NEMBC) and falls under the training coordination of the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA). The instructors are trained and certified by the CBAA and are paid from the AERTP grants.

The AERTP course is a well-developed, nationally recognized, government-funded broadcast training program. But the future of AERTP is uncertain as government funding for the project is drying up. One possible new source of funding is user fees, in which trainees would pay a fee in return for the training. However it is debatable to what extent this could be possible, as new migrant communities do

not have the means or the community power to support the establishment of an ethnic program. According to Indira Narayan, broadcasting project officer for the New, Emerging and Refugee Communities—Outreach, Training and Broadcasting at the NEMBC, it is not fair, and it contradicts the purposes of the program, to ask future broadcasters, who are investing their time and effort as volunteers, to pay for their training.

3CR is a community radio station in Melbourne with an active training program for emerging communities. The free training, provided by the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs' (DIMIA) community grants program, is available for groups who would like to broadcast in their community language. There is a special grant available for new migrant and refugee community radio programs. The grant covers program material, equipment, specialized training, travel, and other expenses. Ongoing funding is also available for communities with non-English language programs.

The program at 3CR shows that continued funding for training is important to ensure that Australia's new ethnic communities have access to the airwaves. Given that these new producers come primarily from small and emerging communities, it is difficult to ask them to sponsor their own training. The government should continue to provide new migrant communities with funds for training and programming to assist them in having a voice and to preserve the diversity of Australia's multicultural society.

Saba El-Ghul [saba13@ozemail.com.au] has worked internationally as a journalist and radio broadcaster, and in Australia as an administrator, broadcaster and trainer in community radio. She has completed her first M.A. on community radio analysis and her second M.A. thesis on community media policy. She is currently a lecturer in Communications and Media Studies at Monash University in Australia.

ORGANIZATIONS

Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) www.abc.net.au

Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) www.cbf.com.au

National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters' Council (NEMBC) www.nembc.org.au

Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) www.cbaa.org.au

Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) www.dimia.gov.au

Public Access and the Preservation of Deaf Culture: An Open and Closed Case?

BY MARY BRADY

Since the passage of the Television Decoder Circuitry Act in 1993 all television sets produced or sold in the U.S. (with a 13-inch or larger display) have been required to be caption-capable. Until the advent of menu-driven playback or display features, however, a special piece of hardware (the "Fred" decoder) was necessary to display any captions present in the broadcast signal. About as big as a DVD/VHS player, and at a cost of about \$50, "Fred" decoders were sold almost exclusively to deaf and hard-of-hearing (HOH) families. They were notably absent in schools, colleges, libraries and other public places, but it didn't matter too much, as there really wasn't a lot of captioning available to decode, anyway.

Now, fast forward a decade or so, to today. The era of ubiquitous captioning is upon us. Captions have come into their own and are present on most DVD programs, numerous public television presentations, and many news and public information programs in the top TV markets. In particularly deaf-conscious areas, say around the Gallaudet College campus in Washington, DC, you can even find them gracing special viewing devices in movie theaters and museum exhibits. The

Although public access channels are thus far exempt from the captioning provisions of the FCC, the Americans with Disabilities Act mandates accessible practices in employment, public facilities and communications services, to the degree that they reasonably can be supported.

FCC has mandated that by 2006, 100 percent of locally-produced programs will be captioned in the top 25 markets. Broadcasters are already gearing up to address these requirements with sponsored captioning for local news and information programs, even in smaller markets.

"The Caption Center predicted that every home in the United States will have a caption-capable television set by the year 2000. We're certainly not there yet, but we're mighty close....," says Gary Robson. (See resources at end.)

So, what's being done with captioning in the world of community media? Although public access channels are thus far exempt from the captioning provisions of the FCC, the Americans with Disabilities Act mandates accessible practices in employment, public facilities and communications services, to the degree that they reasonably can be supported. In community media environments across

the country it would appear that a fair amount of attention is being paid to accessible programming—even in the absence of funding and government mandates! The Alliance's 2003 *Community Media Resource Directory* shows 34 community access centers and organizations providing captioning services, ranging in expenditure from \$500 to \$115,000 per year! Even so, accessible, i.e. captioned, programming for deaf and HOH audiences represents a very small portion of the available programming from public access channels. Why? One can imagine the causes and suggest some possible approaches to expanding the portion of accessible programming.

COST. An hour of realtime (live) captioning runs from \$75-\$125/hour.

AVAILABILITY OF TRAINED CAPTIONERS. Although 20 new programs have come into existence at colleges and universities across the country to offer broadcast captioning training as a specialty subset of

Hillsborough County, Florida Takes a Different Tact

Fremont, California is the first city in the United States to provide realtime captioning for all city council and school board meetings. There is, however, a county government that has been up and running with realtime captions for public meetings for somewhat longer—with a decidedly different approach.

Frank Turano, of Hillsborough County, Florida, decided that if he was going to implement captioning he was going to do it full-bore. The city has hired several full-time court reporters and uses them in rotation for meetings. There are monitors spaced around the room that display open captions, and the meeting is cablecast with captions on the local Government Access television station. The meetings are also taped, complete with time codes to synchronize the text in the

computer to the video.

The court reporters edit the captions, providing a clean verbatim transcript, and place these on the videotape in place of the original captions. The meeting is then rebroadcast several days later with open captions, and the tape is placed in a research room.

A computer in the research room running Cheetah software has all of the transcripts on its hard disk. Any transcript can be called up and viewed, and the person using the room can select sections of the text and ask to see the corresponding video. The system asks the person to insert the appropriate tape, and plays that section using a computer-controlled videotape machine.

skills for court reporting students (stenographers), many of these students will not be available for employment for years. In many states, services are contracted non-locally, adding to the expense and difficulty of procuring such services.

DEMAND. Deaf and HOH audiences tend to be “invisible” to broadcasters and public access operations. They are often isolated within their own communities, and rely upon working, living and socializing in a deaf world, separated from their peers in the hearing community in separate schools, clubs and churches that cater to their communication needs by offering sign language interpretation in limited settings.

So, why should provision of captioned programming be a priority for public access?

With the graying of our population, more people are living with deafness longer. The relative portion of the general audience that could benefit from captioning is growing.

The deaf and HOH population is only a segment of the public audience that could be served by ubiquitous captioning. Think about the last time that you sat mulling over your last board meeting in a noisy bar. Couldn't hear a thing, could you? Captioning makes programming accessible in noisy public environments—the Paris Metro, the windows of your favorite electronics store, or the neighborhood tavern.

Television audio and video messages are only partially understood by those with limited English comprehension. Captions can promote language learning in our increasingly multicultural, linguistically diverse society.

Once audio material is transcribed to textual material, it can more readily be offered in alternate languages. The presence of English captioning promotes English literacy, and supports and reinforces auditory comprehension of English.

Having a textual transcript of an audio program translates well to internet-based public information sources. Text is searchable; audio is not. Text can be conveyed on a narrow bandwidth using low-end equipment; audio cannot. Imagine that lengthy city council meeting being available as searchable text on your public access website the very next morning. Captioning could significantly expand the

RESOURCES

The **Media Access Group** at WGBH provides a concise description of the spectrum of captioning services that help to make television and movies accessible to the deaf, hard-of-hearing and non-English speaking public, as well as audiences in non-auditory environments at <http://main.wgbh.org/wgbh/pages/mag/services/captioning/>.

A thorough history of captioning, the career of realtime reporting, and professional resources for court reporters/broadcast captioners is available from **Gary Robson** at www.robson.org.

A **good primer** on deaf culture can be found at <http://deafness.about.com/cs/deafculture/a/deafculture101.htm>.

The **federal government**, through the Office of Special Education Research, funds at least one national grant program aimed at increasing the quantity and quality of broadcast captioning: www.ed.gov/programs/oseptsms/2004-327c.pdf

Integral Design, LLC, provides consultation on wayfinding, accessible media and exhibits, as well as funding and design of diverse disability-related programs at www.IDimpact.com.

reach of government and educational access programming.

POSSIBLE APPROACHES TO PUBLIC ACCESS CAPTIONING. Don't try to do it “on the cheap.” This is *not* an area for the employment of even well-trained volunteers. Captioning, like sign language interpretation, is not for amateurs. Buying a character generator and putting a fast typist in your control room will not provide acceptable captioning to your deaf and HOH audience. Not even close. Even captioning students may be employed only for captioning of pre-recorded programs, with professional supervision. If you are lucky enough to obtain some volunteer time from highly sought-after, busy, certified court reporters/broadcast captioners—go for it. You can contact them through the National Association of Court Reporters (www.ncraonline.org/).

Do query your state associations of the deaf/HOH (separate organizations). See if they are interested in helping you to obtain sponsors for captioning some segment of your public access programming schedule. In fact, see if you can include some members of these groups among your videography students, board members and volunteers. They are your best source of information as to how to obtain interpretation, captioning, and how to use the Telephone Relay Service or email to communicate with them.

Look for opportunities to secure private or public, local or national funding for a pioneering program to serve your Deaf and HOH public. Form a consortium with other public access leaders. Funding is available and innovators at the National Center for Accessible Media, community colleges and private entrepreneurs are eating up the pie without any help from public access television organizations.

Mary Brady, former student of Nick Johnson, dabbler in public access and cable television, and a founding member of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (now the Alliance), has since digressed into areas of communication disorders, adaptive technology, disability access, governmental funding and other dark corners of private sector enterprise. She resides in Baltimore, Maryland, from whence she swoops down on rare occasions to nudge, critique and otherwise amuse herself in the provision of consulting services to the arts and nonprofit sectors. Contact her via the web at www.IDimpact.com.

Media Literacy & Health CD-ROM in Spanish Breaks New Ground

BY DAMON SCOTT

When folks find out we've produced this resource they're really not surprised. They're motivated and excited, but not surprised." So says Bob McCannon, executive director of the New Mexico Media Literacy Project, (NMMLP) a long-time teacher and media activist based in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Consider the facts: Latinos are this country's fastest growing minority—the figure at roughly 39 million and rising quickly. In states such as New Mexico, California and Hawaii, there are now minority-majorities—meaning all minorities combined outnumber Anglos as a percentage of the population. As can be expected, Spanish language mass media has boomed as well. The circulation of Spanish language dailies has more than tripled since 1990. And perhaps more importantly for media literacy educators, ad revenues for those dailies have grown more than seven-fold since that time. When we look at the Spanish language broadcast industry the growth is even more spectacular—with companies such as Univision, Telemundo, and the Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation doing multi-billion dollar business. The ad revenue for broadcasters, like print media, has exploded.

As an organization dedicated to the deconstruction of media messages, primarily through advertisements, McCannon and his NMMLP staff saw a need. "This is an opportunity for outreach to Spanish-speaking communities not



only in New Mexico, but the country and abroad," says McCannon. The idea was reinforced and supported by the New Mexico Department of Health, within its Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Program—part of the department's Public Health Division. The agreement that was reached between the NMDOH and NMMLP allows the distribution of the CD-ROM at no charge to those who request it. (See side bar below.)

The result: *Medios y remedios*, (MYR) the world's first Spanish language CD-ROM curriculum, dedicated to Spanish-speaking communities and focused primarily on health issues. The CD-ROM technology allows teachers, health professionals, media producers, and activists to present media and health lessons to virtually anyone willing to listen.

Antonio Lopez is a self-described "digital nomad" who recently moved from Santa Fe to New York City. He says he is a digital nomad because he travels from

place to place to work with Native American tribes and bilingual communities to teach digital video production, and to assist those communities in developing their own health perspective on media. "I like to use Spanish media examples with bilingual Latino students because they identify with the cultural product," says Lopez. "They know Tecate is a Mexican beer. *Medios y remedios* is a good resource because it is culturally specific and seems to get the attention of Latino students better than media that features mainly white people."

Sidney Cano of Mexico City was introduced to the CD-ROM at a conference there a little over a year ago. "*Medios y remedios* is a sign of the international necessity of being critical receptors—a necessity that has spread all over the world." Cano goes on to say that she has used the material to work to get better television programs in Mexico, and that many international organizations have been in contact with her showing interest in the product and how she is using it.

Designed to be used in classrooms, family discussions and other group settings, the CD-ROM especially helps teens to become more critical consumers of media, so they can make more informed choices about their health. MYR examines media messages about tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, nutrition, physical activity, relationships and sexuality, and violence. It features 66 Spanish language media examples from magazines, television shows and movies. Questions and answers accompany each media example, highlighting the explicit and implied messages, the persuasion techniques used, and how the media example might influence a young person's health decisions.

"We are the most hyper-mediated society in history. This is a resource that helps to make sense of it all, and we hope folks will take advantage of it," said McCannon.

Damon Scott is director of community outreach for the New Mexico Media Literacy Project.

THE NEW MEXICO MEDIA LITERACY PROJECT

Since 1993, the New Mexico Media Literacy Project (NMMLP), an outreach project of Albuquerque Academy, has brought the media literacy message to hundreds of thousands of children and adults across New Mexico and the nation.

We provide dynamic speakers, multimedia workshops, and unique videos and CD-ROMs on a variety of media literacy topics. Our goal is to make New Mexico the most media literate state in the United States, leading a cultural revolution for the health of our children and the health of our democracy.

To order free copies of *Medios y remedios*, please visit our website at www.nmmlp.org. Click on the "Products" link, and then "Multimedia." From the multimedia page you will see directions on how to place your order.

Voices from the Field

This special section showcases a community of producers who come from places as close as the next neighborhood and as far away as Brazil, Haiti, Vietnam, and Japan. They speak from viewpoints as diverse as youth, seniors, workers, artists, activists, and tribal members. Reading their profiles is both liberating and inspiring. Their stories and programs can help explode our stereotypes, illustrate our differences, and celebrate our common humanity. By amplifying the voices and views of these producers, community channels offer a contribution to the media landscape that is far more diverse than the often-touted universe of multi-channel commercial media "choices."

Julio Wainer *Spreading the spirit of community media in Brazil*

Movies were an old passion. When I was 13 years old I went across the city to watch an old classic silent film. Nevertheless, I didn't study cinema. At the end of the 1970s, working in movies wasn't a solid career, and I decided to study Architecture and Urbanism, as a tool to understand—and work on—the social problems that surrounded my hometown, São Paulo, Brazil, the third largest city in the world. I was amazed by its gigantic urban growth from 30,000 to seven million people in 100 years.

At the beginning of the 1980s, good news came from two sources: the dictatorial regime that was ruling Brazil began to open up and allow more freedoms and videocassette technology was introduced with its many possibilities. I set up a small video business with school friends, aiming to produce programs about social/urban issues.

At that time commercial TV was absolutely closed to independents and there were no distribution options for alternative programs. But in 1984 the Brazilian Association for Popular Video (ABVP) was created to support people and organizations in producing socially relevant videos.

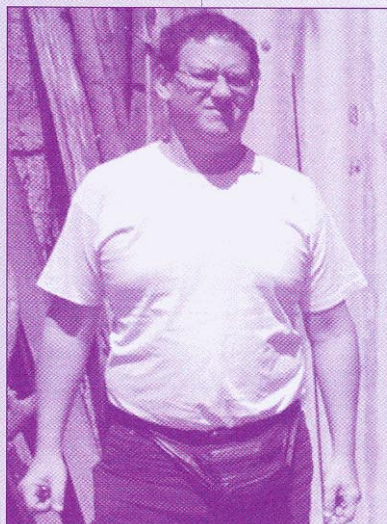
During that same year I met Professor George Stoney, who became a very important person in my life. He came to Brazil through a Fulbright Program to spread the word about using media for social change. I was a video engineer at Catholic University and, after his brief visit, I forged the idea that has guided my work ever since: that social change can be achieved using video as an empowering tool for communities. Using video, communities can better see themselves, their goals, their allies, and their adversaries. We "middle-class outsiders" can be of some help as they are clarifying their identity and establishing a meaning and direction for their actions. At the same time, we can allow ourselves to be transformed by the people and reality we encounter.

It turned out that my philosophy closely matched the philosophy of Brazilian educa-

tor Paulo Freire, who I had the opportunity to meet years later in a joint effort with George Stoney. Freire championed the role of education in helping poor and oppressed people to improve their lives and the world. Better conditions could emerge, he believed, in a dialogue where educators and students would play both roles in order to understand the complex reality that surrounds us.

With help from George Stoney I received a Fulbright grant and visited 15 states in the U.S. to study community TV

and how documentaries could be used as effective tools for social change. When I returned to Brazil I dedicated several years to spreading the word about community TV, which was finally legislated in 1995. The new law mandated six channels for public access, but no funding. Community TV spread throughout the country in a flash, and the leading media activists from the 1980s were elected to



executive positions. Our hopes and ideas for a better world quickly became public policy at the municipal, state and federal levels.

In 1996 I founded a new production company, Alter Midia, which absorbs most of the time I have left after teaching university classes and raising three children. I am currently producing a documentary series about a major educational initiative in the very poor areas of São Paulo. The themes for the six-part series, which is funded by the Secretary of Education and scheduled for completion in December 2004, are social inclusion, local identity, local impact, community and management, pedagogical innovation, and architecture and location.

Since 1990, when my Fulbright grant ended and I returned from the United States, I have often visited the U.S., usually in July when I know some of the people who are most committed to social change will get together at the Alliance for Community Media Conference. Thanks to the Fulbright, I was able to build many solid and good friendships with people who are working in the community and/or in film/video production.

Contact Julio Wainer can at julio@altermidia.com.br.



Yves St. Pierre at CCTV in Cambridge, Massachusetts

Yves St. Pierre

From Student to Teacher at CCTV In Cambridge, Massachusetts

Meet Yves St. Pierre. He had never used a computer until he took a Family Computer Literacy class at Cambridge Community Television. In that class, he learned to use Microsoft Word, opened his first email account, and began using the Internet as a resource for his family. That was several years ago, and now he's using his computer skills as a teacher to help others in his community.

As a computer CENTRAL intern, St. Pierre is volunteering his time to teach computer skills to the Haitian community in CCTV's "Tutorial for Non-English Speakers" program. The program serves linguistic minorities in Cambridge, including Haitian-Kreyol, Spanish, and Portuguese speakers.

"I feel very happy because I love to teach, and I am learning too," says Yves St. Pierre. "So I do the best I can using CCTV's resources to uplift my community."

St. Pierre co-teaches the multilingual program along with CCTV Community Technology Programs Manager David Zermeno.

"This program is so rewarding, it's beyond words," says Zermeno. "How can you possibly describe someone's smile when they first realize that they really can use a computer and the Internet to be part of modern day society? Once they learn the basics, we move on to teach media-making skills with a lot of support."

This is one of several CCTV programs that teach students how to produce short three-to-five minute *Digital Stories*. Digital storytelling integrates multimedia, including voice, still images, and video, and gives people the skills and experience to share their personal histories, resulting in one-of-a-kind stories which are cablecast on CCTV's channels.

"Seeing participants become television producers is very exciting for them and for us as teachers at CCTV," concludes Zermeno. You can access CCTV's library of *Digital Stories* at www.cctvcambridge.org/stream. Coming soon is a story by Marie Rose Cherubin, a student from the Haitian community who is producing a digital story with help from Yves St. Pierre. Susan Fleischmann [susan@cctvcambridge.org] is executive director of Cambridge Community Television in Cambridge, MA.

Geetmala TV

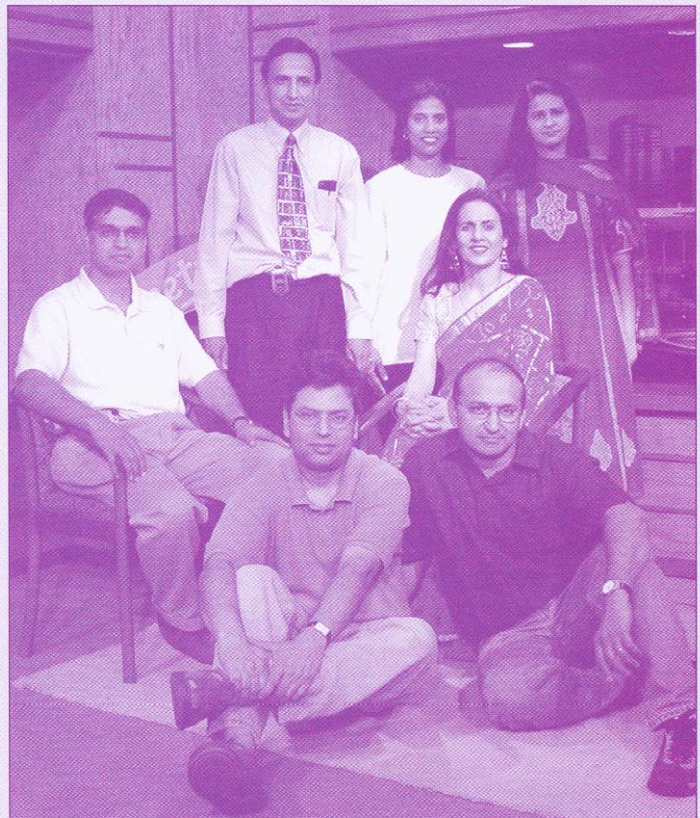
Community programming finds a wider audience in St. Paul, Minnesota

Geetmala TV is a program produced by volunteers from the Twin Cities South Asian community, produced at Saint Paul Neighborhood Network, and broadcast on both cable and local public television. The program was organized by Mukhtar Thakur, a local engineer who has been producing a community radio program as a volunteer for South Asian people (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka) in Minneapolis and Saint Paul since 1990.

In 2001, he recruited volunteers from the community to develop a program concept, organization, and production team. After training at SPNN for several months, they began broadcasting the program weekly on Twin Cities Public Television. The program features music videos and cultural segments for the community in English.

Geetmala TV is one of a number of community-produced programs that are produced at local cable access centers in the Twin Cities, and then are distributed to public broadcast markets. Programs for Minnesota's Asian American communities (Hmong, Vietnamese, Chinese, South Asian), Arab American, and Latino communities are all being produced at access centers and then are distributed to Twin Cities broadcast audiences through TPT's community initiative, The Minnesota Channel. For more information, visit Geetmala TV's at geetmalatv.home.comcast.net/index.htm.

Mike Wassenaar [wassenaar@spnn.org] is executive director of Saint Paul Neighborhood Network.



Geetmala Volunteer Team for Season 2 in 2004: From left [on floor] Tanweer Janjua and Ejaz Saifullah. Sitting from left [on chairs] Nasir Mohamed and Shashi Gupta. From left [last row] Mukhtar Thakur, Urbae Jiwa and Sheeba Khan. Not Shown: Adil Khan and Fazal Harris.

Robert Hamilton

Community Activist Takes on the U.S. Army in Ohio

My name is Robert Hamilton. I live in Jefferson Township, a small community in the suburbs of Dayton, Ohio. We have about 8,500 registered voters, which shows you that we are truly small. This story is about how this small community (David) along with the help and support of local public access television (DATV) took on the U.S. Army (Goliath) and won.

In 2002 the U.S. Army awarded a contract to Parsons Engineering of Newport, Indiana to destroy the deadly VX Nerve agent, one of the deadliest in the world. Parsons planned to perform the first step, called hydrolysis, and the bi-product, called VX Hydrolysate, was to be trucked into Jefferson

Township for step two of the biological treatment and then disposal into the municipal wastewater. This was a potential disaster for the entire region. If a tanker was ruptured, the VX Hydrolysate (with a PH of 13) would eat up blacktop, concrete, or whatever it spilled on. If it got into the waterways, VX would kill everything in its path. If there was a fire, all bets were off.

I had just completed my producer training at Dayton Access Television (DATV), where I learned how to use the various cameras, lights, and tripods, etc. We were also taught how to edit on the AVID. After successfully completing the course, I was ready to sign out the equipment.

When I joined the fight there was already a very well-organized grassroots effort in place called The Citizens for The Responsible Destruction of Chemical Weapons in The Miami Valley. So now the question to me was, "how could I help?"

I decided to give the movement a tool they could take throughout the region to truly sound the alarm. That tool was a documentary video that showed the tremendous threat that the transportation and disposal of VX Hydrolysate posed not

only to Jefferson Township, but to the entire region.

I had just completed my classes and now, the question was, "how was I going to produce a video that moved people to action?"

That's where DATV came to my rescue. With Dale's advice at DATV ("You must open your video strong to get their attention."), I opened the video with the music of impending doom. Pat and Greg asked the important questions ("Does it flow? Is it hard-hitting enough? Are you making your point?").

Steve made sure I could get equipment when I needed it. Dorothy made sure my requests were filled out right and that I had what I needed. Melissa scheduled the time for the largest potential audience. and last, but certainly not least,

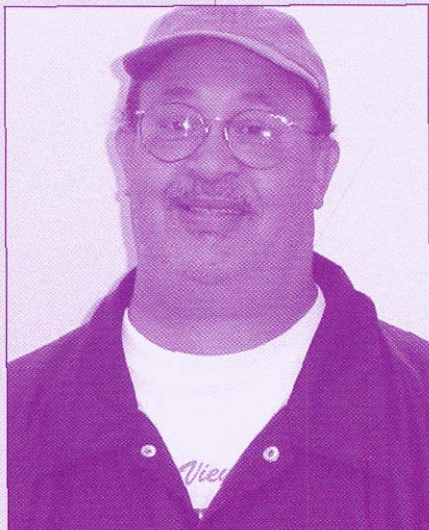
Rick, my technical assistant, took the fight on as if the VX was coming to his backyard.

I could not have accomplished this if it had not been for all their help. As a result of an outstanding grassroots effort that went above and beyond the call of duty on behalf of DATV, David did defeat Goliath. The U.S. Army rescinded their contract.

The video I produced, *Are We Next?*, won the 2003 Roxie Cole Award of Excellence from DATV. This award goes to the person "who most exhibits the spirit of public access television." In July of 2003, *Are We Next?* won first place in the Making A Difference category of the professional division at the 2003 Hometown Video Festival.

In conclusion, I must say, you can determine what your community looks like if you are willing to make an award-winning effort and form a good relationship with an organization like DATV. Once again, I say thank you to the best public access television station in the nation, DATV.

For more information about Robert Hamilton, contact DATV Program Director Melissa Mills [melissa@datv.org].



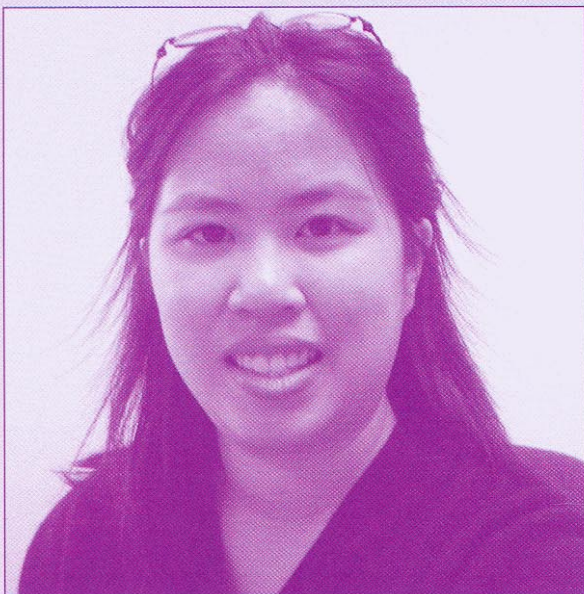
Caroline Antone

Thanks to Access Tucson 'possibilities seem endless'

My name is Caroline Felicity Antone. I am single, a mother of four and a grandmother of four. I am a Native American and my tribal affiliation is Tohono O'odham, of Traditional O'odham Territories in Northern Sonora, Mexico and Southern Arizona, U.S.A. I have been an addiction counselor since 1999.

Becoming a producer and a talk show host at Access Tucson was a miracle for me. Producing is fun and exciting. When I realized what a valuable tool I had in cable access television, I launched a new project, *Breaking the Code of Silence*. In this series I focus on my own neglect, abuse and violence, and tell my experiences and the stories of others. Domestic violence is something I have been passionate about and worked my whole life to stop, by sharing my story every chance I got. Before I got into access television, I felt I just barely made a dent and now the possibilities seem endless. This is just the beginning.

For more information about Caroline Antone and *Breaking the Code of Silence*, contact carolineantone@msn.com. For more information about Access Tucson, contact Lisa Horner at lisa@accesstucson.org.



Ha-Hoa Dang

Boat People S.O.S. Reaching Out in Washington, DC

As public relations manager for Boat People S.O.S. (BPSOS), Ha-Hoa Dang coordinates a cross-media campaign to reach out to Vietnamese youths in the Washington, DC area. In collaboration with Vietnamese American TV (VATV) and Vietnamese Public Radio, the campaign aims to raise awareness around serious issues affecting youths—like smoking, violence, and pregnancy—in hopes that providing a culturally appropriate message will lead to prevention. These messages take the form of public service announcements, a “man-on-the-street” show called *Street Talk*, and radio talk shows.

“Most of the time, we are either seen as ‘model minorities’ who don’t have to deal with any problems, or we are too proud or ashamed to admit we have them. Through this campaign, we are showing the Vietnamese community and the mainstream that the problems do exist and we’re ready to do something about them,” says Ha-Hoa.

Youths play a crucial role in the campaign, serving as actors, producers, and writers. Always a kid at heart, Ha-Hoa remembers the genuine impact of caring mentors who helped her find her own voice. By empowering these youths to do the same, she is able to give a little back to past and future generations of Vietnamese leaders. She adds, “They are the best advocates for their issues. They have the energy and buy-in of their peers. Our role is to cultivate that leadership.”

Boat People S.O.S., a national nonprofit organization serving Vietnamese Americans, works on program areas including health awareness, youth mentoring, domestic violence, and financial literacy. For more information, please visit www.bpsos.org. VATV’s weekly television program, which is carried on Montgomery Community TV, is the only Vietnamese-American television program in the DC metropolitan area and has an estimated audience of more than 35,000 viewers.

Noboru Taketa

Retired Civil Engineer takes Shin Buddhism to the People of Hawai’i through Access

Noboru Taketa is a retired Honolulu City civil engineer who produces a TV series, *Shin Buddhism*, for his temple Honpa Honganji. Shin Buddhism is the largest Buddhist denomination in Hawai’i. Traditionally centered in the State’s Japanese immigrant community, Shin Buddhism has found a broadening appeal among Hawaii’s diverse ethnic population.

Mr. Taketa’s grandfather immigrated to Hana, Maui in 1888 to work on the sugar plantations there. His father moved to Wailuku, Maui where Noboru was raised until he moved to Honolulu, O’ahu to attend the University of Hawai’i. ‘Olelo Community TV provides him with training, production support, and transmission services—but for the most part Mr. Taketa produces the program with his own equipment as a dedicated volunteer. It’s been a longtime hobby for this *Popular Science* subscriber, which began with photography to document his world travels.

Mr. Taketa, 77, still keeps up with the latest technology. He has a G5 Final Cut editing suite set up in his home with a long line of predecessors still humming! Mr. Taketa started producing programs for the Buddhist Studies Center at the University of Hawai’i in the 1980s and over time he has developed a statewide distribution network that reaches all six Hawaiian islands with cable TV—Kaua’i, O’ahu, Moloka’i, Lana’i, Maui and Hawai’i!

His wife Ayako and daughters Mari Lei and Lori Setsu support his efforts enthusiastically, and they report that he spends days and nights each week editing his video series and supporting the requests of viewers and fans.

Having recorded countless hours of lectures, Mr. Taketa has a very refined perspective on Buddhist philosophy. His favorite Buddhist teacher? Taitetsu Unno, retired Jill Ker Conway Professor of Religion at Smith College and published author (Doubleday, etc.). Says Taketa, “Among Shin Buddhist scholars, I think he’s the most well-known.” Unno’s books include *Shin Buddhism: Bits of Rubble Turn Into Gold*, and *River of Fire, River of Water*.

Sean McLaughlin [ceo@akaku.org] is president and CEO of Akaku: Maui Community TV.



Noboru Taketa, *Shin Buddhism* producer, at work in his home editing suite, Liliha, O’ahu, Hawai’i (photo courtesy Lori Setsu Taketa)

Bem Nagase

Preserving Digital Histories in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles

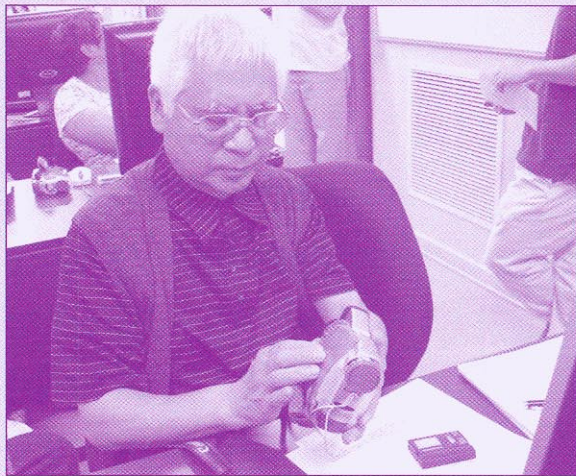
As he plugs his camcorder into the computer's firewire port to begin capturing his most recent footage, Bem Nagase reviews his notes on a video story about karaoke.

"In creating my project, I would say the lighting was the most difficult part for me," says Bem, 71, about his five-minute project. "Basically I shot karaoke machines, DVDs, and a karaoke party where I was a DJ."

While Bem's short video, *Thanks for the Memories*, humorously documents his passion for singing and hosting karaoke events, it also reveals the making of community and how Japanese and Japanese American seniors come together under a common cultural bond.

Bem is a member of the Digital Histories Program, a project of the DISKovery Center in Little Tokyo, which trains older adult Asian and Pacific Islanders on digital video production to create personal and community stories in and about the Little Tokyo neighborhood of Los Angeles.

In confronting their language and



generation barriers, Bem and other members of the program develop an important quality while producing their videos: overcoming their fear of technology.

"Through the assignments and self-interviews, I gradually became accustomed to the camera, to being in front of the camera and through this, my confidence continued to grow."

Oftentimes, seniors and older adults play a passive role as mere interviewees in the production of oral history projects and documentaries. Funded in part by the Community Technology Foundation of California, the Digital Histories Program

was designed to empower participants with media literacy and technical skills to produce short videos with their own creative license. The participants' videos will be a part of a story collage made available on the Internet, in hopes of preserving and educating others of the history of the Little Tokyo community.

"I used dialogue, music, voice over and sound effects with the titles, transitions and credits at the end," says Bem. "I could not believe I made a

film...I was amazed at my learning progress and at how good my video was!"

The DISKovery Center, a community technology center of the Little Tokyo Service Center, is collaborating with Visual Communications, an Asian American media arts organization, to document and preserve the stories of the Asian and Pacific Islander communities. For more information about the DISKovery Center, please visit <http://diskovery.ltsc.org> or email diskovery@ltsc.org.

Davis Park, Program Director, and Monica Peralta, Technology Instructor, The DISKovery Center, Los Angeles.

Veronica Robles

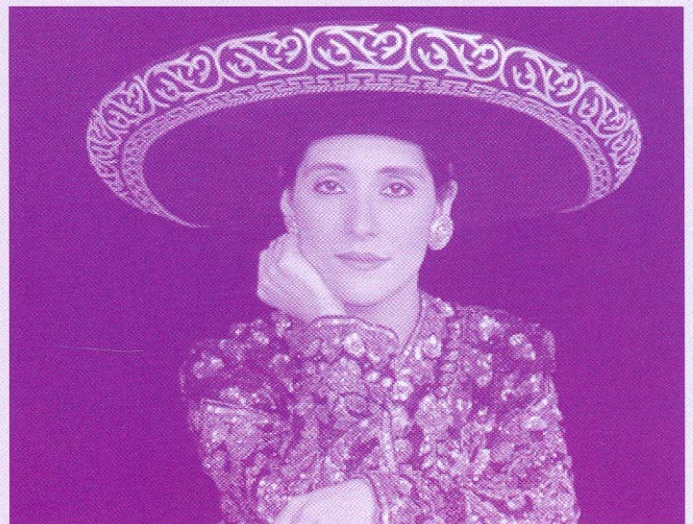
Orale con Veronica in Massachusetts

The name of the show is *Orale con Veronica*. The word "Orale" is a popular Mexican expression that means "to encourage, agree, hurry and celebrate"—all at once! "Veronica" is Veronica Robles, a person in constant motion, who perfectly embodies the expression as the show's creator, producer, singer, dancer, teacher and self-styled cultural ambassador! Talk about multitasking!

After first visiting the U.S. when she was 18 (even then she was leading a mariachi band and a dance group), Veronica Robles has since installed herself in Chelsea, Massachusetts, and has become a force of nature in the world of community access television.

Orale con Veronica is produced in greater Boston and is seen over 16 public access TV channels in Massachusetts. Robles started the series as an alternative to the glamorous and ultra-sexy shows seen on some commercial Spanish TV channels.

"I wanted to introduce the best of Latino roots and culture and the great values that come from it, and also to educate and inform the immigrant community about services and resources available to improve their quality of life in this country," Robles said recently. Produced primarily in Spanish, the show is a lively mix of music, interviews, and dance. According to Robles, she is increasing viewers among native English speakers, "I get email messages from people who tell me that although they can't understand everything, they enjoy the show because it so enter-



taining and different from what they see on regular TV."

Somehow, Veronica has also found time to start a ballet troupe whose youthful dancers are often featured on *Orale con Veronica*. The *Ballet Folklorico Monte Alban* integrates music, dance, and culture to help girls discover their identity and inspire them to grow and achieve their dreams.

Viva Veronica!

Jeffrey Hansell [jeffhansell@onebox.com] is executive director of Malden Access TV, a member of the CMR Editorial Board and web editor for CMR Online. For more information about Veronica Robles visit www.veronicarobles.com/.



Naimah Latif

Seldom Heard Perspectives on The Media Connection in Chicago

On the surface it looked like a story that was sadly routine in Chicago. A young man was shot by a police officer in a public housing project. The police ruled the shooting justified and said that the officer was defending himself. Commercial news media accepted the perspective of the police at face value. But the long-running CAN TV program *The Media Connection* sent a crew inside the housing complex where the shooting took place. Residents there told a different story, one that cast the shooting as part of a pattern of police abuse toward poor and minority communities.

"We talk to people who normally aren't asked, who may not trust other news media enough to talk," says producer Naimah Latif. "We have journalists who are really involved in the community, who gain the trust of grassroots people to get that information and share it with our audience."

Latif started working in public access when cable first came to Chicago in the mid-1980s. Working for a member of the Chicago City Council, Latif helped organize programs about community events, AIDS awareness, and the city's redevelopment plans for the South Side. Soon Latif struck out on her own. She assembled a panel of African American TV, radio and print journalists, and *Chicago Black Media Connection* was born.

"Sometimes we address issues affecting our community, issues that mainstream shows won't touch," Latif says. "Other times we look at the same stories they do, but from what you might call an ethnic perspective." Latif soon changed the name of the program from *Chicago Black Media Connection* to just *The Media Connection*. "We wanted to keep addressing perspectives not normally heard," she says, "but also to broaden it, to bring in journalists from other ethnic groups, and to emphasize the national relevance of the local stories we cover."

***The Media Connection* runs Mondays and Tuesdays at noon on Chicago's CAN TV19. Contact Naimah Latif at Latifmediagroup@talkamerica.net or 312.849.FILM.**

Brotha Clint

San Francisco Media Advocates changing the lives of disenfranchised youth

I first encountered Brotha Clint back in 2001 when I attended CTCNet's Leadership Development Institute in Oakland, California. Since that time, I have had the pleasure of witnessing him at work in the field as one of San Francisco's most committed, independent youth advocates.

Early in 2004, he attended a community-organizing meeting held at Access SF/Cable Channel 29 for San Francisco Media Advocates, a growing community coalition at work on the city's cable franchise renewal. Always energetic about the prospects for training youth in media, Brotha Clint separately approached Access SF to collaborate on a unique training program involving a group of four young, African-American males from the Hunters Point/Bay View neighborhood in San Francisco. For the station, our in-house staff provided no-cost training in iMovie and related digital production using the Macintosh platform. The youth team was also exposed to the principles of field production, the studio television environment and a range of media literacy tools.

Executive Director Zane Blaney shared with me a powerful anecdote that helps to frame the urgency that surrounds Brotha Clint's efforts in San Francisco's Hunters Point/Bay View neighborhood. Zane says, "According to Brotha Clint, one of his youth participants had been offered the chance to start selling drugs on the same day he was offered the chance to get involved with making a video at public access. He chose the latter."

In a letter to our organization following the trainings, Brotha Clint writes, "...thank you for the support

of the young men here in San Francisco that are attempting to free themselves from the cycles of violence that have permeated our most precious resource, their minds." He continues, "My team is now prepared to embark upon this fantastic voyage called television production, thanks to the dedication and professionalism of Access SF/Cable 29."

For our part, we go on record and return the compliment. The station is always grateful for the opportunity to collaborate and to demonstrate how



Brotha Clint [right] and youth training participant.

public access television is a viable resource for social change. Personally, I commend Brotha Clint for changing the lives of disenfranchised, young people of color in our City—one youth at a time.

Marc Smolowitz [marc@accesssf.org], works at Access San Francisco/Cable Channel 29. Contact Brotha Clint at seventhenvirtues@yahoo.com.

Philip L. Hand

Cincinnati's 'epitome of a community access producer'

There are more than 150 producers in the Media Bridges family. This is the story of one of them.

The only camera that retired custodian Phillip L. Hand, 73, of Cincinnati ever used before he enrolled in classes at Media Bridges was a still camera used strictly for recreation. Now he is the person behind the minicam taping *Word of Life Ministries*, a weekly one-hour church service he produces for the First Baptist Church of Walnut Hills, which airs on two local Time Warner Cable channels.

Through Media Bridges Hand was able to learn technical skills and field and studio production as well as meet interesting people, including community and national leaders, which he calls "rejuvenating." During his seven years as a volunteer producer for Media Bridges, Hand has worn many hats including that of cameraman, set designer, and lighting director and has worked on various types of programs. Besides producing the series of religious services, he has also assisted with the taping of government meetings, award shows, concerts, plays, and talk shows.

Facilities Coordinator Brian Losekamp calls him a "volunteer extraordinaire. He has contributed a great deal to the community, helping many individuals, nonprofits, govern-

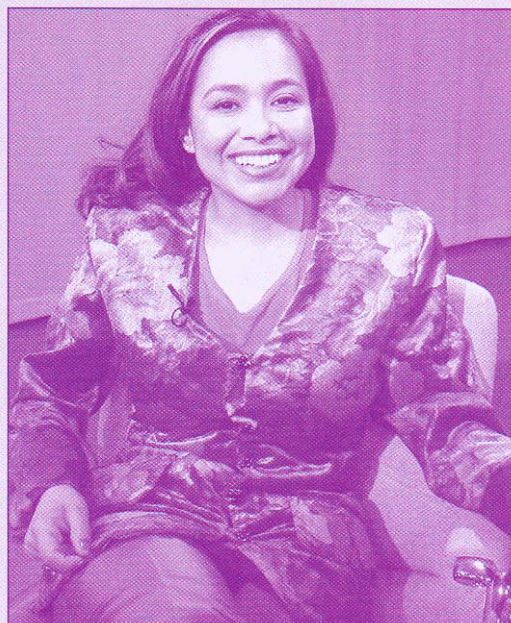
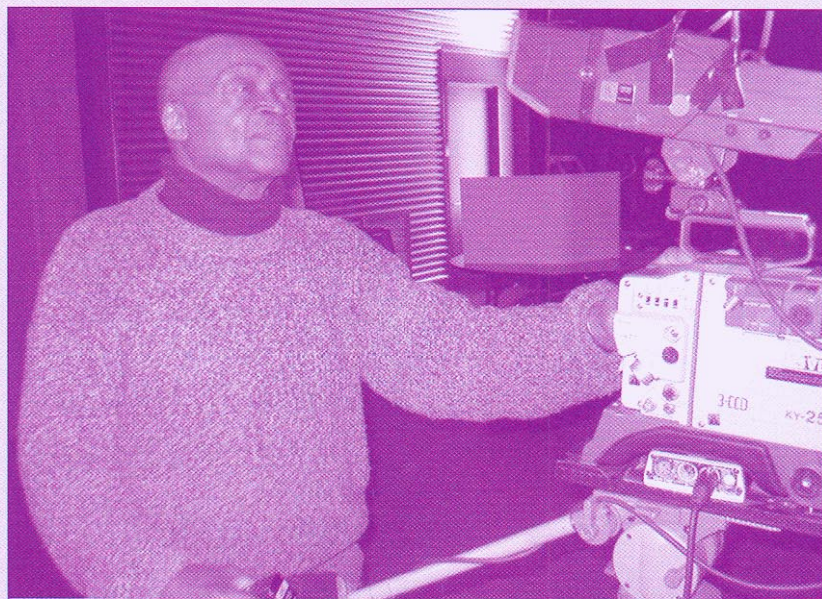
ment entities, and a church communicate effectively and meaningfully with residents of the greater Cincinnati area via public access television."

Education Coordinator Sara Mahle calls Hand the epitome of a community access producer: "dedicated, enthusiastic, eager to expand his vast knowledge base, and always more than willing to assist others in any way he can."

Hand plans to continue producing and learning new skills at the media center indefinitely and has become one of Media Bridges' biggest boosters; he encourages others to take advantage of the free training taught by "knowledgeable" instructors.

Hand has been recognized for his work as a volunteer producer by his peers. He received a "Lend a Hand Award," named after him, at the Blue Chip Awards in 2002. He was tickled to be honored: "I really felt like a celebrity...like I had won an Academy Award."

Carol Skawinski
[carol@mediabridges.org] is development and communications coordinator at Media Bridges Cincinnati. For more information, visit www.mediabridges.org.



Dalia Tapia

Positive Role Models from Espiritu de Latina in Chicago

Growing up in Chicago, Dalia Tapia never saw positive role models that she could identify with on television. "When Latino children don't see themselves on TV, they ask themselves, 'Am I not good enough?'" she says. "I asked myself that."

Tapia worked as a librarian and elementary school teacher in the near-Southwest Side neighborhood Little Village, close to her home in Pilsen. She saw that her students, particularly the girls, suffered from the same problems in cultural representation that she herself had experienced.

"Television, whether it's in English or Spanish, just doesn't reflect my experience as a professional Latina woman living in the United States," Tapia says.

Tapia had taken video production training at CAN TV, and after talking with her students, she began to see how she could put her video skills to use. Tapia now produces *Latina Spirit/Espiritu de Latina*, a celebration of the accomplishments of Latina women and a showcase of Latino culture in Chicago. The show, which is primarily in Spanish, features interviews with Latinas about their professional experiences, coverage of dance and poetry performances, and discussions on issues like immigration and political redistricting.

"Once Latinos in Chicago and the U.S. start putting on our own shows and representing ourselves, people will start to watch," she says. "I wish I could have watched something like this when I was growing up."

Contact Dalia at daliatapia@hotmail.com.

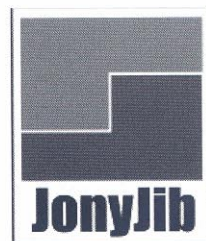
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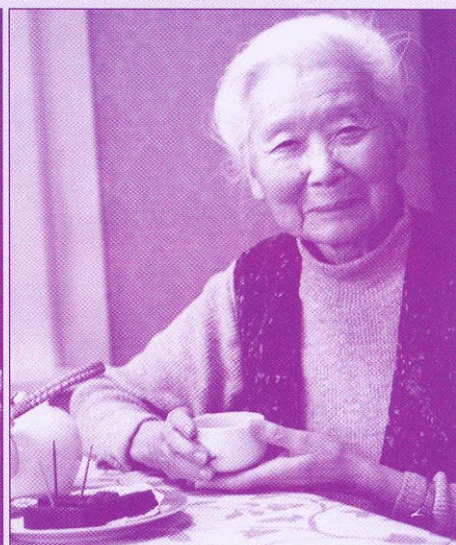
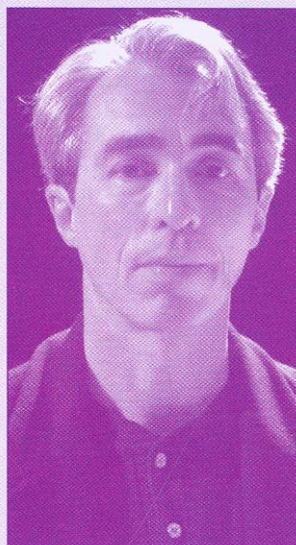
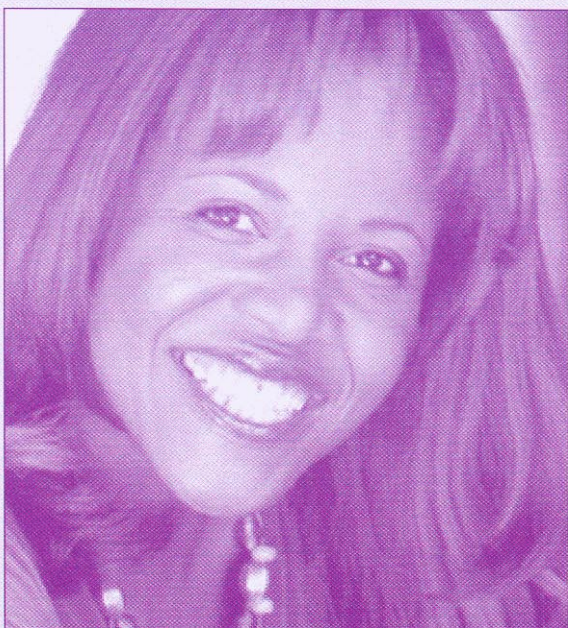
Pura Vida TV in Atlanta shares the Richness of Hispanic Culture

Costa Rican attorney Chantal Matthews arrived in Atlanta in 1997 to help her sister, Sheylla Bingham, former Consul General of Costa Rica. Chantal was initially trained in video basics at Comcast and later took various classes on digital camera and editing at Atlanta's People TV. In October 2001, just a few weeks after 9/11, she produced her first access show, a live, bilingual, hometown meeting called *America Under Attack: A Latin Perspective*. Her guests included representatives from the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Latin American Association to offer the business perspective; the Consul General of Mexico; the Consul of Spain; and the Consul of Columbia to offer an international view, and psychologists and physicians to offer spiritual and emotional support.

Chantal then launched a weekly bilingual show, *Pura Vida TV*, which features a magazine format with segments on travel, news, health, and other topics. The show has featured well-known Latinos such as Luis Enrique, Bienvenidos, and Julio Savala, and covers community issues such as immigration, health, and social events. Her production crew includes Christopher Matthews, Shirley Cordero, Sam Stone and many volunteers. *Pura Vida TV* runs on People TV in Atlanta on Channel 24 every Friday at 4:30 p.m.

Chantal, who is Costa Rica's 1990 National Fencing Champion, says that there are approximately 400,000 Hispanics in Georgia, including around 40,000 Costa Ricans. "It has been an honor and a pleasure helping my community through *Pura Vida TV*," she says, "and I look forward to continuing to improve the quality of life for Hispanics in the U.S., while giving Americans the opportunity to learn more about the richness of our culture."

Contact Chantal at Chantal@puravidatv.com. Her website is www.puravidaTV.com.



Tim Rooney (left) and Lury Sato (right) in her North Portland home after being interviewed for the Oregon Japanese American oral history project. After her father was arrested by the FBI on December 7, 1941, Lury and her family were incarcerated in the Portland Livestock Exposition Center, then transferred to the Minidoka internment camp in Idaho. Photo of Lury Sato by Joni Shimabukuro.

Tim Rooney and Lury Sato

Oral Histories Reveal Strength and Courage of Japanese-Americans in Portland, Oregon

In 1998, the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center was formed in Portland, Oregon, dedicated to the gathering and preservation of the history of Japanese Americans in Oregon. Very early in its history, it was decided that, rather than gathering oral histories on audio cassettes, the Legacy Center would focus on videotaped oral histories. I was volunteered. Note the passive tense.

With no experience in video, I signed up for classes at Portland Cable Access, then immediately began gathering oral histories. The first subjects were 22 Oregon veterans of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the all-Japanese American fighting outfit that became the most decorated military unit in American military history.

Two summers of interviews followed in Hood River, Oregon, a hotbed of anti-Japanese sentiment during the war years. The interviews, conducted by acclaimed oral historian Professor Linda Tamura, resulted in *War Stories*, a public reading featuring four actors, focusing on the wartime experiences of these vets, and their return after the war.

Since early in 2003, thanks to funding by the Spirit Mountain Community Fund and Oregon Cultural Trust, the project has been greatly expanded. With nearly 300 hours of interviews completed and many more scheduled, the raw material is being assembled into documentaries for use in schools, museums, and historical societies.

We have interviewed immigrants as old as 102, American-born Japanese stranded in Japan when the war broke out, MIS translators who spent the war in the Pacific campaign, and many veterans and camp internees. And through all of the interviews runs a common thread: that the strength and courage of these people, persevering through a very dark period of American history, should serve as an example to us all. That freedom and liberty must always be guarded. And that, through telling their stories, these people have helped to ensure that the hysteria and racism that led to these events will never be repeated.

Tim Rooney [trooney@pcmtv.org] teaches video production and nonlinear editing at Portland Community Media in Portland, Oregon. Besides the oral history program, he works on many music productions, and documents the events of Portland's Japanese American community.

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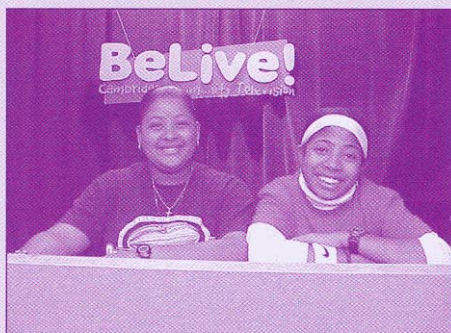
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Cambridge's CCTV Makes a Difference



Luz Paola Perez Acosta and D'Landy Galiza Ramirez

My name is Luz Paola Perez Acosta and my sister's name is D'Landry. We have a new TV show in Spanish for kids at CCTV. It's called *Un Poco De Todo* (A Little Bit of Everything). The show runs Monday afternoons. We talk about music, pop culture, what's happening in the news, youth and Hispanic issues, and everything that young people love to talk about. When I came to CCTV, the first thing I did was to learn how to use the computer. I feel so excited because it's a big change to go from the computer lab to having a talk show. I never thought I could be on TV. Even though I came to use computerCENTRAL, I didn't know that I also had the opportunity to have my own show. At first I was really nervous but now I think it's exciting. I also think that this television experience is going to benefit my future. Who knows—I never thought it

was possible to have a television show, but now I see it's possible because I'm already doing what I never would have imagined before. So I'm really excited about it because if I get a job in television I'm going to be better prepared for it.

My name is D'Landy Galiza Ramirez. My sister and I love our show on CCTV. The show allows us to talk about school, friends, fashion, and issues related to our Santo Domingo culture and heritage. The television world always fascinated me but I never thought I would have the courage to attempt having my own TV show. It's actually very difficult for me because I'm shy, and I was embarrassed at first. But it's incredible how many people watch you. The kids at school keep coming up to me and saying that they saw me on TV. I was worried what they would think, so I was glad when they were all excited and congratulated me. They even want to come to CCTV to be on my show.

But my mom is the most excited of everyone. She called all of our relatives in Santo Domingo and told them that my sister and I had a television show. She's very proud now because she has a lot of hope for our future. I think this experience is definitely helping me learn more about television and communication. So I guess I have a lot of hope too. I just want to thank David and CCTV because this couldn't have been possible without them.

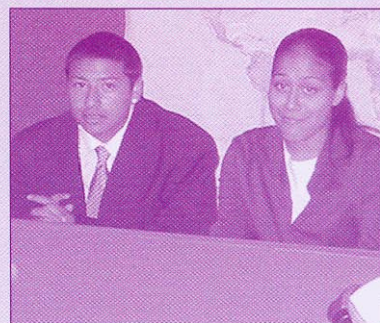
Dominique Jean Baptiste

My name is Dominique Jean Baptiste. I am from Haiti. I have three sisters and three brothers. My father died two years ago and my family had to leave our home and everything behind in a hurry because the political system in my country is very difficult right now. The country is very troubled. The people no longer have faith in president Jean Bertrand Aristide. There are economic problems, and people don't have work. Even the food in Haiti is expensive. Because of crime, many people have been killed in the streets. That is why I don't want Aristide for president. But now that he is no longer in power and living in Africa, I don't know what is going to happen with Haiti.

I am in the U.S. because I want a safe place to finish my schooling and prepare my life for the future. I want to be a nurse so that people won't die, and I can help them live



happy lives. I come to CCTV's "Tutorial for Non-English Speakers" every week to learn English and about technology. I want to be a good professional woman. The tutorial helps me learn more English and computers, which are important for my future. As a nurse, I want to go back to Haiti to help my family with the money from my job. Thank you CCTV.



Jose Mendez and Lissette Yanes on the set of *Casi en Vivo*, their taped anti-smoking "news" program.

Latino Youth Peer Leadership Program Somerville, Massachusetts

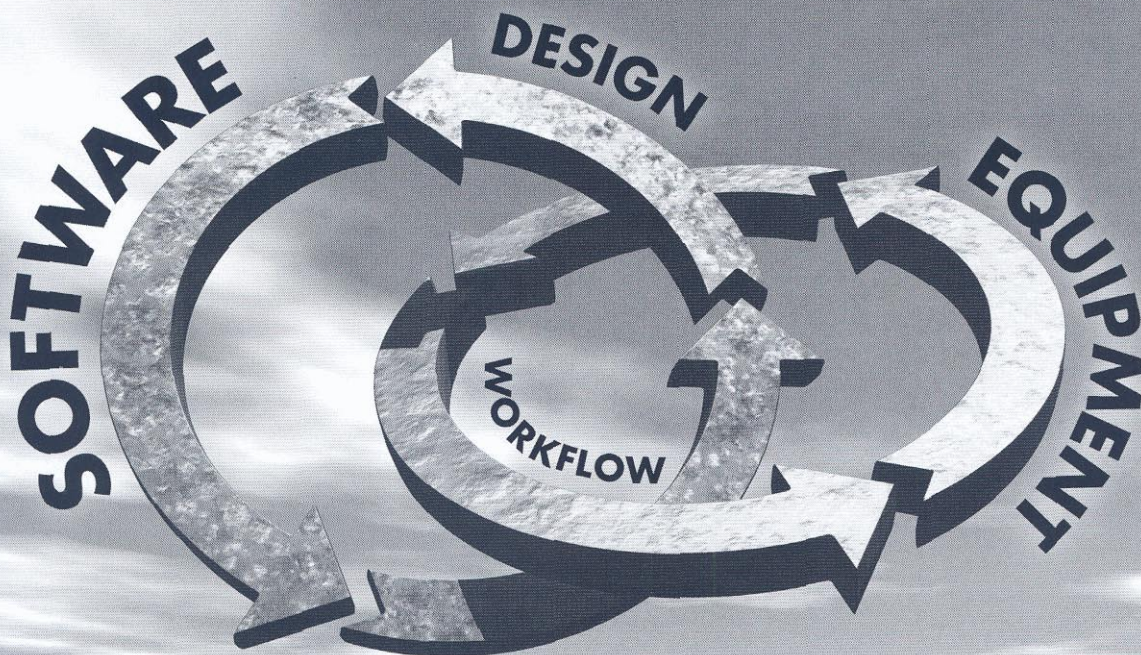
Somerville Community Access Television (SCAT) and The Community Action Agency of Somerville's (CAAS) Latino Youth Peer Leadership Program teamed up to create anti-smoking videos to counter the mass media messages that present smoking as cool. The three-year program was funded by a grant from the American Legacy Foundation. Its goal was to help the teens think critically about media content by learning the processes used in creating media. They learned how the person creating the message could influence the attitudes and behaviors of the viewers.

Over the three years of the program, the five Latino teens created several video projects and produced and hosted a weekly, live talk show from the SCAT "Hot Set" called *Tele Jovenes*.

The project for 2004 is a parody of a newscast titled *Casi en Vivo* (Almost Live). The stories in the newscast are related to the hazards of smoking cigarettes. Aru Manrique, the CAAS Latino Youth Coordinator works closely with the youth on this project. He said, "Kids like technology and learning how to use the equipment, but the big thing is the message. Using parody helps to make the project interesting for the youth. The teens making the video get a view into how media professionals work to create a message."

The newscast is in Spanish with English subtitles. For more information, contact info@access-scat.org.

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Paul Congo, Executive Director of Access Monterey Peninsula, has spent over 25 years involved in community access television, and along the way, he learned what it takes to succeed in this broadcast field.

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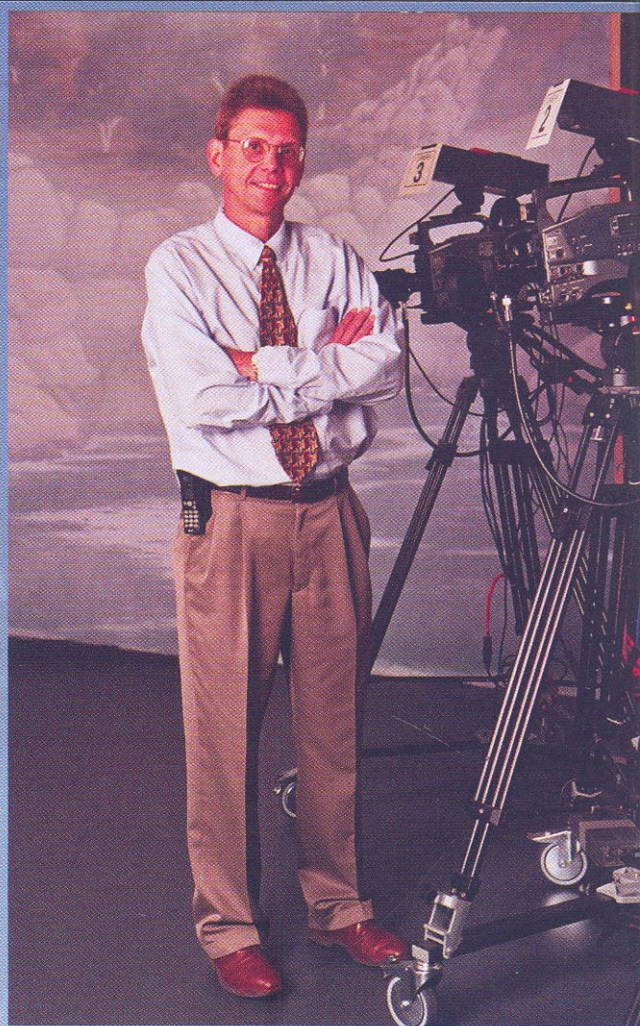
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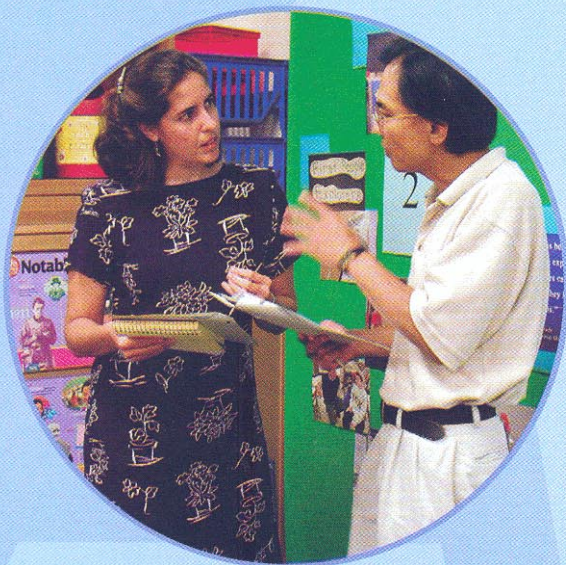


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